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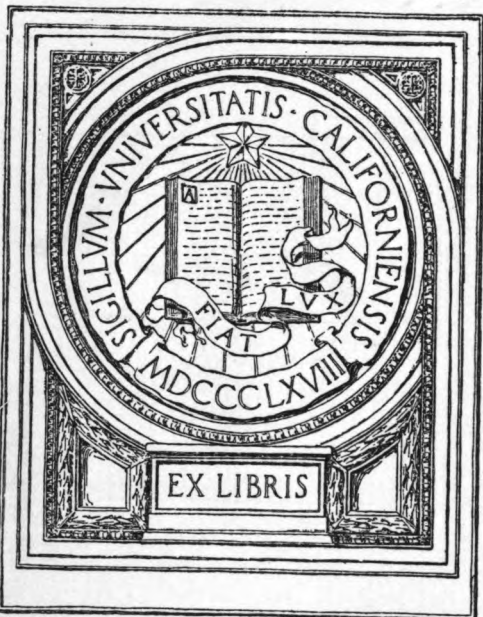
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## Poems from 'Punch'





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# POEMS FROM PUNCH

1909—1920

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

BY

W. B. DRAYTON HENDERSON

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## Preface

Of "Singing masons building roofs of gold."

*King Henry V. I. II.*

THE following poems from 'Punch' are brought together to represent a larger number which amid much delightful but, as is fitting, ephemeral verse, serve the permanent interest of the Comic Spirit. They cover the period between 1908, when the last collection of the sort was published, and the end of 1920. The latter date I have accepted as a terminus, because it seems to mark, as nearly as it can be marked, the end of a period that is distinct from other periods, and the commencement of a new one.

Odd happenings tell us that this new cycle has arrived—old names, questions, and problems begin to turn up again : and not exactly as they were. Just now, for instance, harsh news comes

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roaring out of Printing House Square, pounding ragged holes in the gentle noise of Fleet Street. The Australians have added more thorns to our cricket laurel. Before the next 'bus bound prayerfully to Paul's wipes out the horrid spot with its smooth low singing, rampant patriotism is at work compelling indolent youth from "pat-ball" to the manly "willow." In a little while there will be fresh ardours on the village greens—and cartoons of the ardours: arduous as ever, even if diminished somewhat of the pride of 1909. We have come from strike to strike also. And sales-people, who were then growing to oily perfection, whence they slipped and fell, are once more polite. The war the messes hoped would come between the polo and the huntin' proved strangely accommodating, and so came. The cause of women—dear ever to the Comic Spirit—presses on to new supremacies. Their goals of the decade are now matters of antiquarian interest. But new illumine the future—and in their light the Comic Spirit, no doubt, smiles her Mona

## PREFACE

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Lisa smile as she wanders in the churches of sainted women who converted wild Saxons or suchlike, and made them sit down orderly in their thousands,—from St. Materiana's to St. Editha's, and beyond. For there she reads firm protests of modern incapacity for such spiritualities, and sees spaces provided for the signatures of incapable, modest females ; sees them—if she wanders where I did—unfilled, unsigned !

The difficulties of this last decade, if they were different difficulties from those of other decades, gave some individuality to the comedy of the time : using 'comedy' in its broadest sense, as indicating the behaviour of the Comic Spirit. For comedy as such is for the most part the encounter of the Comic Spirit with difficulties, and its triumph over them. Not the struggle, mark it ; for Struggle and Agonies, properties of the Tragic Spirit or whomever else, are no belongings of the Comic. Neither is victory deferred, or partial victory which suits the pathetic ;

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or unworthy victory, which may suit the burlesque. The Comic Spirit encounters, and it overthrows. *Veni, vidi, vixi*, is its record—with 'vidi' and all intervening delays left out. It does its seeing as it comes, and when it arrives it is already victor—with laurels and a Triumph.

Also, it is a victor without expectation. It did not look like a victor. You would not have picked it in the paddock—not even to place. Its appearance at the start is, characteristically, insignificant. The course set appears to be impossible for it. Yet it romps in a winner, and its very life becomes the doing of the impossible, the overturning of something big by something very little. Put it tersely, high comedy is the immediate Triumph of a seemingly minor over a seemingly major value.

To this end the Comic Spirit makes use of all sorts of properties, simple and subtle, animate and inanimate. It could man a rush and overcome Othello, if it had the mind, or in Mercutio overcome battalions of Fates. It does actually begin

even more simply and terminate quite as high ; and since the height is where we wish to come, it may be useful to follow the progress, through some typical situations.

At the start may come some simple slipperiness, tropical or arctic, playful underneath the impressed dignity of a greatness of the flesh or the church or the state ; upsetting it completely, and winning a laughter that would be incredible if the victim were less great or the offence more so. Not much above would come some small folly—a mole on Cyrano's nose, or, say, the spectacles that crown Dostoievsky's Government official in *An Unfortunate Incident*. This minor property, steadfast on the head of the official at the instant of his complete disappearance down the throat of a very major crocodile, draws, quite understandably, the uproarious laughter of his friend and wife-widow. Next might come a spider, as in the historical case of Miss Muffet. Solidly seated upon a tuffet, fortified with curds and whey inside and outside, and embellished, no doubt,



with implements suiting her occupation, no one could have been more formidable than that person. In comparison, the spider was the most obvious minor. Yet no sooner did he arrive, having done his seeing as he came, than his now well-known victory was allowed by the most bigoted strategical-retirement war correspondents. And since then he has retained his fame, without contest, as a veritable instrument of comedy.

Of higher but parallel significance is a certain apple in Mr. Augustus John's picture—"Down to the Sea": at least, I always feel it so. An unquestionable procession of weird women and strange children moves along a headland. They are of a world where there is nothing that one knows. It might easily be intolerable. But one of the women holds an apple in her hand. It gleams amongst the unknown, an offering to the Intelligence; and propitiatory, so that the bewildered deity, finding something so insignificant and familiar so much more than holding its own against strangeness, shares in the triumph, first

in anticipation through sympathy, then actually using the apple as a sort of *point-d'appui* whence to search out the unknown:—as Eve did.

Raise the level yet higher, and instead of simple meanings overcoming strange people it is the microcosmic simple human who triumphs against scarcely conceivable cosmic splendour. Remember Sirius rising with Procyon attendant and the unlooseable glittering bands of Orion—suns and suns and the white wonder of nebula. It is only recalled, not seen, the time being day, but recalled so as to present the true magnitude. Somewhere beneath it walk Dr. Middleton, of Meredith's *The Egoist*, with his daughter Clara but this moment self-withdrawn from immolation before the pattern of Patternes, and with no reason to be grateful to her unshriven parent. "Clara linked her arm with her father's and said, on a sudden brightness, 'Sirius, papa!'

"He repeated it in the profoundest manner. 'Sirius! And is there,' he asked, 'a feminine scintilla of sense in that?'

"It is the name of the star I was thinking of, dear papa.

"It was the star observed by King Agamemnon before the sacrifice in Aulis. You were thinking of that? But, my love, my Iphigenia, you have not a father who will insist on sacrificing you!

"Did I hear him tell you to humour me, papa?

"Dr. Middleton humphed.

"Verily the dog star rages in many heads," he responded."

That is all the apology Clara ever got or, indeed, ever needed. Against cosmic brightness her microcosmic affair lifted itself, and proved (as Hardy proved in another connection), "that of the two contrasting magnitudes the latter was, for us, the more important": proved it immediately, with an opulence of light against any doubtful interpretation, like that of Sirius itself, preserved against "a night of frost and strong moonlight."

The human triumph can be intenser also, as a last illustration will show from Tchaikovski's

“Trio in A minor”—To the memory of a great artist. The second movement, as near as can be, presents the drama of the artistic effort under stress of the imminence of death. *Ars longa, vita brevis* is the theme—the uncertainty of which is carried on the strings, while the sombre certainty, the sombre sense of mortality moves upon the muffled pianoforte, a sort of dead march :

Comes death on shadowy and resistless feet ;  
Death is the end, the end.

Against this opposition, and commentary, the theme of the artist's life seems to develop : to strengthen. It heeds. Then it takes swift possession. The actual theme from the piano is appropriated by the strings, and in a glory of technical as well as moral triumph minor absorbs major : and death, become not the foe but an actual material of art, is swallowed up in victory.

All comedy—even high comedy—is not necessarily as intent as this last : nor all—even low—so simple as the nursery rhyme. Yet all,

worth the name, has sympathy with both—from Menander to Shakespeare or Molière or Meredith. The apparent major may be age and tallow-dripping corpulence, as in the case of Falstaff, and the triumph that of the mere suppressed voice of the Comic Spirit breaking through in his shout on Gadshill,—“They hate us, youth.” More often it is no physical defeat, but a moral one. It is convention without meaning, learning without significance, mode without kindliness, show without reason: every sort of sham and hardening of mind or heart against the unformulated fact of fluid life. And comedy is, so, life's victory.

This victory, of course, is not confined to art. Living that is worth the name must be a succession of such instances, becoming, as culture ripens, of greater range, and surer.

In comparison with earlier times this larger embrace shows itself now and then—a quality of our time or race: particularly in the front we present to circumstances or events that people

quite unmoved by the Comic Spirit might find anything but attractive, except as an occasion for martyrdom or some such hardening of mind quite opposed to the immediately accessible Comic Spirit. We can enjoy the hidden beauty, or the very fact of opposition, behind the forbiddingness of things—even though the forbiddingness destroys body and body-comfort at a stroke. Enjoy it, too, not in the negative way of *Non dolets*, but actively and radiantly. To one so gifted, the forbiddingness of forbidden cities becomes as nothing, and the shadow of their golden watch-towers everything, as it falls, mingling with lotus blossom, in the moat. The Antarctic, blowing its cheeks off with storm and promise of immediate destruction, is of little account—and the “splendid pirate” of Sir Ernest Shackleton’s last expedition buys matches in the face of it and pays for them in futures—a bottle of champagne per match, to be handed over at a dream ‘pub’ in a most improbable future. The war furnished other illustrations. This spirit

was one of its very few virtues, without which it could not have carried on at all. Simple and daily life has them too, with the same result. For the spirit of comedy is the hope within and the light upon it, its shelter and its power to dare. It is the urge to a radiant beauty in the house of life we build, and the metal by which the roof, as it were, of that common house becomes a roof of gold.

If our comedy is the golden roof we raise, the shining triumph of the small matter of man's spirit over frowning great difficulties, something must be exacted of the builders who, if it is reared at all, must rear it. True comedy is essentially social. It reflects truth, and its servants building it constantly and immaterially must be servants of the truest social good. Satirists and cynics, tragedians and farceurs, may be as remote from life as they please and as individualistic. The servant of the Comic Spirit knows his kind, moves with them and loves them. He could be strong without this love no more than Antaeus without

earth. It puts him in possession of the strength of the whole. Allow for the necessary semi-detachment of the artist, and it gives to all who serve the Comic Spirit that sense of more than equalness to the task which makes men sing as they work and of that work otherwise perhaps uninspired, makes the true *domus aurea*.

Doubtless such love can be intense, and foster comedy, where there is little to love. But it goes beyond intensity where there is much. It becomes diverse, many-coloured, passionate yet urbane, robust yet fanciful ; and comedy, responsive to all its moods, becomes as various.

The pages of *Punch*, to apply what has been said, are an illustration of such Comedy. In obvious and in subtler ways, of fine jocoserie or of fine courage, they show the unrecorded minor besting the plausible major. Sometimes, if not mountains, then sizable hills are brought to labour, and the *ridiculus mus* which ultimately appears proves to be of quite different maternity, putting



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them to the blush : as in Mr. Hilton Brown's "To an Early Daffodil," or Mr. Chalmers's "To a Bank of England Pigeon," where the modern instance, modest Scillies or drab Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, wins the prize from the epic Cyclades or from Cypris-not-to-be-out-done. Mr. Chalmers gives an even more natural example of it in "Little Cow Hay." Here the good story of the wholesome doings of the Culpeppers, fit and famous, is piled high—only to have an insignificant ribald moment, regardless of them all, flutter with proud crowing to its very crown :

But that must be nigh  
Sixty seasons away,  
When things was all different  
D'ye see—an' to-day  
There ain't no Culpeppers  
At Little Cow Hay.

Sometimes the minor human makes the triumph. Opposed by a full-grown if incomplete planet, he takes it up, without effort, as a very little thing : Smith, M.A., Oxon., for instance, of Mr. Brether-ton's poem; or the hero of "The Desert Optimist,"

who, if history went so far, would doubtless be Piccadillyish in Penang and urban in the Gobi.

Most often, however, it is no particular coup of the Comic Spirit that these poems celebrate. It is the Comic Spirit preparing itself for any, by making sure of the strong social life, in all its disciplines or humours, from which its strength springs. It contemplates the towers which whisper to Smith in Mesopotamy the smooth, cool enchantments of the Middle Age. It regards London—Fleet Street levying tribute from all romance, Charing Cross Road and the ancient kingdom of books, people and zoo and parks—and from all this it gathers the comfort “of no mean city,” so that our gentlemen adventurers at the end of things may possess that, and with it give a genuinely comic overturn to alien unpleasantnesses at time of need. Such help is precious, and Mr. Symns is not the first to record it.

“Urbs errat ante oculos ;”

Then Fortune, send me where you list,  
I care not, London holds me close  
An exile, yet an optimist.

The greatest of such times of need has (we hope) come and gone. And not a little of the activity of the Comic Spirit while it lasted was just such a gathering, on a larger scale, and such a distribution of the gathered strength. The khaki flood covered up accounted landmarks. Even among the priests of the Ideal, the Ideal was not seldom lost. The Comic Spirit remembered both, and quietly recalled some things that were continuous beneath all change. The resulting poems as they appeared in *Punch* dealt with traditional themes, fairies and fancies and symbols of the spiritual ripening of the land under generations of love ; but with a new tenderness, accented by the need, and also a new scope that included in the magic circle actual work-a-day doings, especially those of ships and sea. Of these, Miss Farjeon's "Nursery Rhymes of London Town" come first to thought, with Miss Fyleman's fairy poems and Miss Fox Smith's marines, all three represented here, and, fortunately, available complete in separate volumes as well.

It is needless to speak of the strength which came from such accounting of our spiritual possession. Col. McCrae's "In Flanders Fields," and Mrs. Robertson Glasgow's "Dulce et Decorum," antiphonal one to the other, are both included here. They answer for those who

... with the flame of their bright youth unspent  
Went shouting up the pathway to the sun.

And history can take care of the rest. It is necessary to complete the tale of possession, however, by noting, in addition to the "Nimphidia" and poems of sentiment, those in memory of great servants of the Social Good, and hence of the Comic Spirit, or of that spirit itself most immediately, which *Punch* admitting in its scheme from the start, makes possible to include here. And finally, there are the poems on sport. There is an obvious difference between the tenderness and fancy of the 'Nimphidia' and the rollicking certainty of the last. Yet the two are complementary as flowers and earth. Oberon was first cousin to Robin Hood before Robin had become

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a myth, and now may be half your fairy music is the echo of yesterday's or yester-year's hunting horn. Half your fairy flowers grow on fields that have known harsh ploughing—Flanders fields will bear them among their poppies. So, if the noting of national sentiment contributes to the Comic Spirit, this noting of national discipline (which has a sentiment of its own now, as well as that it may help to create) does so also. It may be war, or hunting, or cricket, or

When eight strong fellows are out to row  
With a slip of a lad to guide them :

from it all comes to the individual the strength of the group—and a knowledge too of those peculiar delights of comedy, a genuine sincerity of technique and a constant opposition of the best laid plans to a trifle—a ball or a fox or a rapid feather—with the certainty that out of that situation laughter may spring.

W. B. DRAYTON HENDERSON.

## Prefatory Note

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Stoughton), etc.; Crosbie Garstin, *Vagabond Verses* (Sidgwick and Jackson), with which will be coupled a new volume (Heinemann) including poems from *Punch* reprinted here; A. P. Herbert, *Play Hours with Pegasus*, etc. (Blackwell); A. L. Jenkins, *Forlorn Adventures* (Sidgwick and Jackson); E. V. Knox, *The Brazen Lyre* (Murray), etc.; R. C. Lehmann, *The Vagabond* (Lane); W. H. Ogilvie, *Rainbows and Witches*, etc. (Matthews), *Hearts of Gold*, etc. (Oxford); R. K. Risk, *Songs of the Links* (Duckworth); Sir Owen Seaman, *In Cap and Bells*, etc. (Lane), and *A Harvest of Chaff*, etc. (Constable).

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## The School for Motley

["It is pessimism which produces wit. Optimism is nearly always dull."]

When I was a feather-brained stripling  
And new to my frivolous Muse,  
I parodied AUSTIN and KIPLING  
And floundered in CALVERLEY's shoes.  
With hope as a tonic I primed my internals  
And sent in my stuff to the various journals.

Although the wet blanket of chronic  
Rejection adhered to my form,  
I took the above-mentioned tonic  
And managed to keep myself warm.  
My verses were light, but my spirits were  
lighter ;  
Some day, I kept saying, the sky would get  
brighter.

P.P.

A

2 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Years passed, but my lot never varied,  
And hope seemed to suffer a slump,  
And life became empty and arid—  
In short, I contracted the "hump."  
Despair filled my heart, once so sanguine and  
placid ;  
Thenceforward I wrote not with ink, but with  
acid.

I put away laughter and pleasure,  
I sought Fortune's arrows and slings,  
And found what a wonderful treasure  
Lies hid on the dark side of things ;  
For woe gave me wit, and my bile-begot vapours  
Procured me the ear of the humorous papers.

And now, when prosperity chases  
The frown from my forehead, I go  
And scatter my cash at the races,  
Or visit a music-hall show ;  
Restored to a decent depression, *instantly*  
I turn out a column of exquisite banter.

THE SCHOOL FOR MOTLEY 3

Sour grapes make the daintiest nectar ;  
I fill up a bumper each night  
To banish the fatuous spectre  
Of dull-witted joy from my sight,  
And, sitting alone in a darkness Cimmerian,  
I drink to the toast, " A long life and a  
weary 'un ! "

STANLEY J. FAY.

July 5, 1911.





# *The Elder Song*



## To the God of Love

Come to me, Eros, if you needs must come  
This year, with milder twinges ;  
Aim not your arrow at the bull's-eye plumb,  
But let the outer pericardium  
Be where the point impinges.

Garishly beautiful I watch them wane  
Like sunsets in a pink west,  
The passions of the past ; but O their pain !  
You recollect that nice affair with Jane ?  
We nearly had an inquest.

I want some mellower romance than these,  
Something that shall not waken  
The bosom of the bard from midnight ease,  
Nor spoil his appetite for breakfast, please  
(Porridge and eggs and bacon).

Something that shall not steep the soul in gall,  
Nor plant it *in excelsis*,  
Nor quite prevent the bondman in its thrall  
From biffing off the tee as good a ball  
As anybody else's ;

But rather, when the world is dull and gray  
And everything seems horrid,  
And books are impotent to charm away  
The leaden-footed hours, shall make me say,  
" My hat ! " (and strike my forehead)

" I am in love, O circumstance how sweet !  
O ne'er to be forgot knot ! "  
And praise the damsel's eyebrows, and repeat  
Her name out loud, until it's time to eat,  
Or go to bed, or what not.

This is the kind of desultory bolt,  
Eros, I bid you shoot me ;  
One with no barb to agitate and jolt,  
One where the feathers have begun to moult—  
Any old sort will suit me.

E. G. V. KNOX.

April 5, 1911.

## The New Resistance

[A novel form of opposition is threatened on the part of mutinous wives. The development is due to the success of certain Suffragettes who, after being admitted to gaol of their own heroic choice, have contrived by dint of fasting to prevail on Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE to let them out.]

No, Frederica, no ; I may have knuckled  
Under, at times, to woman's soft appeal,  
But now I have my armour on and buckled ;  
Tears cannot melt that tegument of steel ;  
That which I've said I've said :  
" You *shall not* wear a bee-hive on your head ! "

I have allowed you loosely to conduct your  
Home-life according to your lack of taste,  
But to permit this pestilential structure  
Would be to have my dignity displaced ;  
Frankly I draw the line  
At such a hat on any wife of mine.

When we exchanged our pledges at the altar  
You undertook to honour and obey ;

10 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And though, ere now, I have been known to  
palter

With manhood's rights, this time I'll have my  
way ;

I lay the law down flat,  
Saying, " You *shall not* wear a thing like that."

Nor would it shake my purpose should you follow

The lead of Suffragettes that live on air,  
Refusing, out of cussedness, to swallow  
Your salutary meals. I shouldn't care

Two paltry jots or tittles  
What attitude you took about your victuals.

You might adopt a course of strict starvation,  
But you would never break my manly pride ;

You might arrest the fount of sustentation  
Till you were just a bag of bones and hide,  
But that would not disturb

A man of stouter stuff than GLADSTONE (HERB.).

Believe me, I am anything but brutal ;  
I take no pleasure in a hollow cheek ;

## THE NEW RESISTANCE

11

I could not get my heart to hum or tootle  
If you were slowly waning week by week ;  
But here I must be firm,  
Or I should show no better than a worm.

And, if you stuck to it and went on sinking  
Until you failed to draw another breath,  
Your widower would console himself with  
thinking  
That there are tragedies far worse than death :  
Dishonour may be reckoned  
The first of such, and your bee-hat the second.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

July 28, 1909.

## A Whine from a Wooer

Once on a time, ere leagues for woman's freedom  
Had shed upon the world their golden gleam,  
Ere dames had stormed the fortress of M.P.dom,  
The mere man reigned supreme.



No female dared to challenge that position ;  
She only lived to grovel at his throne,  
Content if she obtained his kind permission  
To call her soul her own.

Then, lovers' vows were food for maids' digestion ;  
Then, swains received their meed of fond support,  
Or read in azure eyes the plaintive question,—  
Why come you not to court ?

That was indeed a great and glorious era ;  
But now we mourn for moments that are not,  
Since modern damsels bluntly state that we're a  
Sad and sorry lot.

Lovers, whose wounds still crave the same old  
healing,  
Find when they come to throw the handkerchief  
An absolutely callous lack of feeling  
Almost beyond belief.

A WHINE FROM A WOOPER 13

I love my country ; I would gladly serve her ;  
But, since her daughters have no eyes to see  
A matrimonial prize, I say with fervour,  
    " This is no place for me ! "

Fixed is my resolution to escape hence ;  
I used to think my skin was fairly tough,  
But kicks have been more plentiful than ha'pence ;  
    It isn't good enough !

England, farewell, a long farewell ; for why let  
The heart remain a slave for chits to tease,  
When there is many a comfy little islet  
    Set in the Southern seas.

Thither I 'll go, a lorn and lonely wight who,  
Grown tired of wooing Phyllises, may rest  
Content to know some coloured beads would buy  
    two,  
    *Two* of the very best !

HARTLEY CARRICK.

Jan. 26, 1910.

## The Glad Good-bye

[According to the New York correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*, recent practical tests prove that the substitution of ragtime melodies for the lugubrious farewell music usually played on a big liner's departure does away with the mournful scenes attending such functions and puts everybody in the best of spirits.]

When I broke the news to Mabel that a most  
insistent cable

Had demanded my departure to a land across  
the sea,

She occasioned some dissension by announcing  
her intention

Of delaying her farewell until the vessel left the  
quay.

I displayed a frigid shoulder to her scheme, and  
frankly told her

That no public show of sentiment my tender  
heart should sear,

For I knew the tears would blind me when "The  
Girl I Left Behind Me"

And the strains of "Auld Lang Syne" rever-  
berated in my ear.

But I've recently relented and quite willingly  
consented

To be sped upon my journey by the mistress of  
my soul ;

I shall banish sorrow's canker ere the sailors  
weigh the anchor,

And present a smiling visage when the ship begins  
to roll.

There'll be no one feeling chippy when the band  
plays " Mississippi "

(Such a melody would even lend a fillip to a  
wreck) ;

I shall laugh and warble freely when they start  
" The Robert E. Lee,"

And my cup will be complete when " Snooky-  
Ookums " sweeps the deck.

Tears of joy there'll be for shedding when " The  
Darkie's Ragtime Wedding "

Sends a syncopated spasm through the pas-  
sengers and crew ;

And, when warning tocsins clang go, down the  
 gangway Mab will tango,  
 While I bunny-hug the steward to the tune of  
 "Hitchy-Koo."

STANLEY J. FAY.

July 30, 1913.

### Wintry Fires

Lady, having been engaged since May-day  
 (Pity that the Spring should ever stop !)  
 Now the year's no longer in its heyday,  
 Don't you think we'd better let it drop ?

In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly  
 Turns to love, as doubtless you're aware ;  
 In the Spring we wax exceeding sprightly,  
 Due, no doubt, to something in the air.

Then, as was both natural and proper,  
 We two met and, scorning all delay,  
 Vowed to wed, and neither cared a copper  
 For the pregnant fact that it was May.

Summer came and, warming with the weather,  
 Rarely was an ardour such as mine ;  
 You 'll recall that, take it altogether,  
 For an English summer it was fine.

Summer turned to Autumn, and September  
 Opened to the world her golden feast ;  
 Quite a record month, as you 'll remember,  
 And my love, if anything, increased.

Honestly, I thought it was a sure case ;  
 Only, now the early Winter's come,  
 Lady, as in others', so in your case,  
 I confess to getting rather numb.

Do not deem me fickle, dear, and faithless ;  
 Though the readjustment seems to be  
 Sudden—not to call it startling—nathless  
 You can hardly put it down to me.

Love appears, for some unfathomed reason,  
 Like a flow'r that ripens with the sun ;  
 And, like everything that has its season,  
 Withers when its little course is run.

P.P.

B

That 's what I conceive to be the matter ;  
And I write, believe me, with regret ;  
For I own, with no desire to flatter,  
That you 're quite the nicest girl I 've met.

Still, farewell, or (put it less severely)  
*Au revoir* ; I hope you 'll keep the ring ;  
Snows are brief, and I, who loved you dearly  
Once, again may do so—in the Spring.

CAPT. KENDALL.

*Almanack*, 1914.

## The Fount of Inspiration

You ask me, Araminta, why my pen,  
Whose airy efforts helped me once to win  
you,  
Has, since you made me happiest of men,  
Apparently resolved to discontinue  
Its periodic flights  
And steadily avoids the Muses' heights.

## THE FOUNT OF INSPIRATION 19

I, too, have wondered. Are connubial cares  
Antipathetic to divine afflatus ?

Yet many a bard has piped his liveliest airs  
After surrendering his single status ;  
Or can it be the War

That 's been and dried me up in every pore ?

Darling, I groped for light, but found no ray ;

Chill with despair, I almost ceased to seek a  
Way through the fog, when suddenly to-day  
Like ARCHIMEDES I exclaimed, " Eureka ! "

I found indeed the path  
This morning as I lay inside my bath.

For yesterday to rural scenes you fled

And left me, duty's slave, to desolation ;  
To-day I sought my tub with measured tread  
And spent an hour immersed in contemplation  
Just as I used to do

Ere yet in beauty side by side we grew.

No urgent call to breakfast broke my rest ;  
Serene and snug I heard the quarters chiming,



And, as the brimming waters lapped my breast,  
Almost unconsciously I started rhyming ;  
Then through my mind it shot  
That thus were all my master-works begot.

Straight from the slopes of Helicon the stream  
Poured through the tap its music-making  
shower ;  
Each floating bubble held a precious gleam  
Which grew to glory as a lyric flower ;  
Idly I laved my curls,  
And from the sponge there dropped a rain of  
pearls.

Therefore, when back you hasten to my side,  
Place this, my love, among your resolutions—  
Though eggs grow chill and bacon petrified,  
Never to hustle me in my ablutions,  
And, to redeem your fault,  
Order me several tins of Attic Salt.

STANLEY J. FAY.

July 28, 1915.

## Time's Revenues

[A straight talk addressed by a middle-aged bachelor to the love of his youth.]

No, Honoria, I am greatly flattered  
When you cast a soft, seductive eye  
On a figure permanently battered  
Out of shape by Anno Domini ;  
Yet, you 'll take it please, from me,  
It can never, never be.

Vainly,—and you mustn't be offended  
Should a certain candour mark my words—  
Vainly is the obvious net extended  
Underneath the eyes of us old birds ;  
Nor are we—it sounds unkind—  
Taking any salt behind.

You have passed, you say, the salad season,  
Growing sick of boyhood's callow fluff ;  
You prefer the age of settled reason—  
Men with minds composed of sterner stuff ;  
All your nature, now so ripe,  
Yearns towards the finished type.

Yes, but what about your full-fledged fogeys ?  
Youth is good enough for us, I guess ;  
Still we like it fluffy ; still the vogue is  
Sweet-and-Twenty—ay, or even less ;  
Only lately I have been  
Badly hit by Seventeen.

I have known my heart to melt like tallow  
In the company of simple youth,  
Careless though its brain was clearly shallow,  
Beauty being tantamount to Truth ;  
Give us freshness, free of art,  
We'll supply the brainy part.

Thus in *your* hands I was soft as putty  
Ere your intellect began to grow,  
When we went a-Maying in the nutty  
Time—it seems a thousand years ago ;  
*Then* I wished to make you mine ;  
Why on earth did you decline ?

You declined because you had a notion  
You could choose a husband when you would ;

There were better fish inside the ocean  
Than had come to hand—or quite as good ;  
So, until you reached the thirties,  
We were treated much as dirt is.

Then you grew a little less fastidious,  
Wondering if your whale would soon  
arrive,  
Till your summers (age is so insidious)  
Touched their present total—45 ;  
Well, then, call it 38 ;  
Anyhow, it's *far* too late.

You may say there's something most unknightly  
Something almost rude about my tone ?  
No, Honoria, when regarded rightly,  
These are Time's revenges, not my own ;  
You may deem it want of tact,  
Still, I only state the fact.

Yet, to end upon a note less bitter,  
You shall hear what chokes me off to-day :

'Tis the thought (it makes my heart-strings  
twitter)

Of a Young Thing chasing nuts in May :  
'Tis my loyalty to Her,  
To the Girl that once you were.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

*Almanack*, 1910.

## *Chorus of the Months*



## To an Early Daffodil

Rare, rare bloom of the sun enslaven,  
Laughter-laden and gold-bedight,  
How came you to a Northern haven,  
To a sky the colour of anthracite ?  
To what fair land do your thoughts go homing,  
Southern shore with cream waves combing,  
Where the birds and bees are all day roaming  
And nightingales sing to the stars all night ?

Was it Persephone's guileless finger  
Coaxed you first from Sicily's sward,  
Where the herdsmen's steps were fain to linger  
And the cattle splashed in the drowsy ford,  
While the Satyrs danced with their Naiad neighbours  
To a measure of shepherd-pipes and tabors,  
And the Cyclops toiled at his endless labours  
By the flaming forges of Etna's lord ?



Or were you born by the staid Cephissus  
Where the dull Boeotian days went by,  
To mind men ever of fond Narcissus  
Where Helicon climbed to the stormy sky ;  
Where the clouds still follow the tearful Hyads  
By the homes of the oak-tree Hamadryads,  
And the Thracian wind with its sough and sigh  
adds

Homage to graves where the heroes lie ?

I love to think it ; but could you tell us  
We should find, I fear, that with all your class  
You know as much of the land of Hellas  
As I do, say, of the Khyber Pass.  
For I doubt you are none of the old-time lilies  
Beloved of Hector and fleet Achilles ;  
In the Channel Isles, or perhaps the Scillies,  
You were grown in a hot-house under glass.

C. HILTON BROWN.

Feb. 14, 1912.

## The Despair of My Muse

Ye great brown hares, grown madder through the  
Spring !

Ye birds that utilise your tiny throttles  
To make the archways of the forest ring  
Or go about your easy house-hunting !  
Ye toads ! ye axolotls !

Ye happy blighters all, that squeal and squat  
And fly and browse where'er the mood entices,  
Noting in every hedge or woodland grot  
The swelling surge of sap, but noting not  
The rise in current prices !

But chiefly you, ye birds, whose jocund note  
(Linnets and larks and jays and red-billed  
ousels)  
Oft in those happier springtides now remote  
Caused me to catch the lyre and clear my throat  
After some coy refusals !

Ay, and would cause me now—I have such bliss  
Seeing the star-set vale, the pearls, the agates  
Sown on the wintry boughs by Flora's kiss—  
Only the trouble in my case is this,  
I do not feed on maggots.

Could I but share your diet cheap and rude,  
Your simple ways in trees and copses lurking ;  
But no, I need a pipe and lots of food,  
A comfortable chair on which to brood—  
Silence ! the bard is working.

Could I but know that freedom from all care  
That comes, I say, from gratis sets of suitings  
And homes that need not premium nor repair  
Except with sticks and mud and moss and hair,  
My ! there would be some flutings.

So and so only would the ivory rod  
Stir the wild strings once more to exaltation,  
So and so only the impetuous god  
Pound in my bosom and produce that odd  
Tum-tiddly-um sensation.

## THE DESPAIR OF MY MUSE 31

And often as I heard the throistles vamp,  
    Pouring their liquid notes like golden syrup,  
Out would I go and round the garden tramp,  
Wearing goloshes if the day were damp,  
    And imitate their chirrup.

Or, bowling peacefully upon my bike,  
    Well breakfasted, by no distractions flustered,  
Pause near a leafy copse or brambled dyke,  
And answer song for song the black-backed  
    shrike,  
    The curlew and the bustard.

But now—ah, why prolong the dreadful strain?—  
    Limply my hand the unstrung harp relaxes ;  
The dear old days will not come back again  
Whatever Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN  
    Does with the nation's taxes.

Lambs, buds, leap up ; the lark to heaven climbs ;  
    Bread does the same ; the price of baccy's  
    brutal ;

And save (I do not note it in *The Times*)  
They make exceptions for evolving rhymes,  
Dashed if I mean to tootle !

E. G. V. KNOX.

March 24, 1920.

## A Child of the Sun

Winged pirate with the poisoned dagger !  
Devourer of the jampot's hoard,  
And quite incorrigible ragger  
Of every British breakfast board,  
Till blind with surfeit to your doom you stagger,  
Drunk as a lord ;

Till, trapped amid the heady spices,  
Snared by the treason of your taste,  
Foreseeing not the hand that slices  
(Be cautious, woman, not with haste !)—  
Mary, who's always bold at such a crisis,  
Severs your waist ;

Wasp (to be brief), my dear good fellow—

A pestilential bore to some

Who mark you round their plates grow mellow,

But I am glad to hear you hum—

Which is your favourite brand, old boy, the  
yellow

Or greengage plum ?

'Ware of your appetite for topping

I do not shriek nor tremble if

I find you round my foodstuffs sloping,

But, like a man, at danger sniff,

Watching my hour, well-armed and always  
hoping

To have you stiff.

Nay, what is more, I praise your pounces,

I contemplate with joy your nerve ;

At every boom my bosom bounces,

It almost pains me when you swerve

Down to your last long sleep in 16 oz.

Of pure conserve.

P.P.

C

34 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

For this I know, what time you smother  
Remembrance in that final bout,  
The sun's your sire, the earth's your mother,  
You bring the days of halcyon drought ;  
Therefore I weep for you the while, my brother,  
I wipe you out.

E. G. V. KNOX.

July 20, 1910.

## Herbs of Grace

### VI.—ROSEMARY

Whenas on summer days I see  
That sacred herb, the Rosemary,  
The which, since once our Lady threw  
Upon its flow'rs her robe of blue,  
Has never shown them white again,  
But still in blue doth dress them—

*Then, oh, then*

*I think upon old friends and bless them.*

And when beside my winter fire  
I feel its fragrant leaves suspire,  
Hung from my hearth-beam on a hook,

Or laid within a quiet book  
There to awake dear ghosts of men  
When pages ope that press them—

*Then, oh, then*

*I think upon old friends and bless them.*

The gentle Rosemary, I wis,  
Is Friendship's herb and Memory's.  
Ah, ye whom this small herb of grace  
Brings back, yet brings not face to face,  
Yea, all who read those lines I pen,  
Would ye for truth confess them ?

*Then, oh, then*

*Think upon old friends and bless them.*

W. W. BLAIR FISH.

April 11, 1917.

## Spring Cleaning

The hailstorm stopped ; a watery sun came out,  
And late that night I clearly saw the moon ;  
The lilac did not actually sprout,  
But looked as if it ought to do in June.



I did not say, " My love, it is the Spring " ;  
I rubbed my chilblains in a cheerful way  
And asked if there was some warm woollen thing  
My wife had bought me for the first of May ;  
And, just to keep the ancient customs green,  
We said we 'd give the poor old house a clean.

Good Mr. Ware came down with all his men,  
And filled the house with lovely oily pails,  
And went away to lunch at half-past ten,  
And came again at tea-time with some nails.  
And laid a ladder on the daffodil,  
And opened all the windows they could see,  
And glowered fiercely from the window sill  
On me and Mrs. Tompkinson at tea,  
And set large quantities of booby-traps  
And then went home—a little tired, perhaps.

They left their paint-pots strewn about the stair,  
And switched the lights off—but I knew the  
game ;  
They took the geyser—none could tell me where ;  
It was impossible to wash my frame.

The painted windows would not shut again,  
 But gaped for ever at the Eastern skies ;  
 The house was full of icicles and rain ;  
 The bedrooms smelled of turpentine and size ;  
 And if there be a more unpleasant smell  
 I have no doubt that it was there as well.

My wife went out and left me all alone,  
 While more men came and clamoured at the  
 door

To strip the house of everything I own,  
 The curtains and the carpets from the floor,  
 The kitchen range, the cushions and the stove,  
 And ask me things that husbands never know,  
 " Is this 'ere paint the proper shade of mauve ? "  
 Or " Where is it this lino has to go ? "

I slunk into the cellar with the cat,  
 This being where the men had put my hat.

I cowered in the smoking-room, unmanned ;  
 The days dragged by and still the men were  
 here.

And then I said, " I, too, will take a hand,"

And borrowed lots of decorating gear.  
I painted the conservatory blue ;  
    I painted all the rabbit-hutches red ;  
I painted chairs in every kind of hue,  
    A summer-house, a table and a shed ;  
And all of it was very much more fair  
Than any of the work of Mr. Ware.

But all his men were stung with sudden pique  
    And worked as never a worker worked before ;  
They decorated madly for a week  
    And then the last one tottered from the door,  
And I was left, still working day and night,  
    For I have found a way of keeping warm,  
And putting paint on everything in sight  
    Is surely Art's most satisfying form ;  
I know no joy so simple and so true  
As painting the conservatory blue.

A. P. HERBERT.

May 14, 1919.

Lines to a Mudlark

[In memory of the days when Summers were wet.]

Thrice happy fay, ah, would that men could model  
 Their lives on thine, most beautiful, most calm,  
 Melodious songster ! List, how, while we  
 swaddle

Our limbs in mackintoshes, thy clear psalm  
 Rises untroubled. Lo ! low thou dost waddle  
 About in filthy pools and find them balm,  
 Insatiate of beastliness and muck,  
 Blithe spirit of our summer, hail, O duck !

There is no gleam of comfort in the heavens,  
 Now, while we sit with suppliant hands and  
 groan,  
 Pavilion-bound the impotent elevens,  
 The farmer cursing at the tempest's moan,  
 But thou, O duck, O duck, of Mrs. Evans,  
 For ever singest in mellifluous tone,  
 The deluge pouring from thy rain-proof back,  
 Loud orisons of praise. Thou goest " Quack,"

And once more, "Quack," well knowing to  
recover

The first fine careless sound, egregious brute,  
Out in the orchard yonder, where some lover

Maybe has wandered with goloshless boot  
In other years, and plucked from boughs above her  
(Matching his lady's cheek) the ripened fruit :  
But now in vain they vaunt their crimson front,  
One cannot pick them, not without a punt.

Ah, yes, thou singest on, thy voice assuages  
(Or ought to) human complaints about the corn,  
Perhaps the self-same voice that in past ages  
Cheered the sick heart of HAM some early morn,  
As he leaned out and cried, "The flood still rages,  
The Ark is tossing in a sea forlorn,  
But some live thing is happy ; don't condemn  
Our Eastern climate, JAPHET ! Cheer up, SHEM !"

But I, when I observe no sunshine dapple  
The leaden pall above, the rayless gloom,  
And hear thee singing 'neath the pendant apple,  
Although I praise thee, duck, I also fume,

## LINES TO A MUDLARK 41

I ask for vengeance, for the gods who grapple  
With too much fortune, for the hand of doom ;  
I like to think that thou must end thy joys,  
And stop that silly sort of rootling noise.

I lift my nose to catch the wafted savour  
Of incense stealing from the onion-bed,  
The perfume of the sage leaf. O, thou laver  
In filthiness and slush, I want thee dead—  
No more to gloat upon our grief, nor favour  
The air with that wild music, but instead  
With vermeil fruit, like those on yonder trees,  
Garnished in dissolution. Also peas.

E. G. V. KNOX.

SEPT. 4, 1912.

### Pagan Fancies

Blow, Father Triton, blow your wreathéd horn  
Cheerily, as is your wont, and let the blast  
Circle our island on the breezes born ;  
Blow, while the shining hours go swiftly past.  
Rise, Proteus, from the cool depths rise, and be  
A friend to them that breast your ancient sea.

I shall be there to greet you, for I tire  
Of the dull meadows and the crawling stream.  
Now with a heart uplifted and a-fire  
I come to greet you and to catch the gleam  
Of jocund Nereids tossing in the air  
The sportive tresses of their amber hair.

High on a swelling upland I shall stand .  
Stung by the buffets of the wind-borne spray ;  
Or join the troops that sport upon the sand,  
With shouts and laughter wearing out the day ;  
Or pace apart and listen to the roar  
Of the great waves that beat the crumbling shore.

Then, when the children all are lapped in sleep  
The pretty Nymphlets of the sea shall rise,  
And we shall know them as they flit and creep  
And peep and glance and murmur lullabies ;  
While the pale moon comes up beyond the hill,  
And Proteus rests and Triton's horn is still.

R. C. LEHMANN.

Aug. 14, 1912.

## Ballade of August

Now when the street-pent airs blow stale

A longing stirs us as of yore

To take the old Odyssian trail,

To bend upon the trireme's oar

For isled stream and hill-bound shore ;

To lay aside the dirty pen

For summer's blue and golden store

'Neath other skies, 'mid stranger men !

Then let the rover's call prevail

That opes for us the enchanted door,

That bids us stretch the silken sail

For bays o'er which the seabirds soar,

And foam-flecked rollers pitch and roar,

Where nymph maybe, and mermaiden,

Come beachward to the moonrise hoar,

'Neath other skies, 'mid stranger men !

Blue-eyed Calypsos, Circes pale

(The sage who shuns them I abhor),

These—for a fortnight—shall not fail



44 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

To thrill the heart's susceptible core,  
To bind us with their ancient lore,  
Who rather like to listen when  
Sweet-lipp'd the sirens voice their score,  
'Neath other skies, 'mid stranger men !

ENVOY

Masters, who seek the minted ore,  
It's only August now and then,  
Ah, take the Wanderer's way once more,  
'Neath other skies, 'mid stranger men !

P. R. CHALMERS.

Aug. 23, 1911.

Farewell to Summer

Summer, if now at length your time is through,  
And, as occurs with lovers, we must part,  
My poor return for all the debt, your due,  
Is just to say that you may keep my heart ;

## FAREWELL TO SUMMER 45

Still warm with heat-waves rolling up the sky,  
Its melting tablets mark in mid-September  
Their record of the best three months that I  
Ever remember.

I had almost forgotten how it felt  
Not to awake at dawn to sweltering mirth,  
And hourly modify my ambient belt  
To cope with my emaciated girth ;  
It seems that always I have had to stay  
My forehead's moisture with the frequent  
mopper,  
And found my cheek assume from day to day  
A richer copper.

Strange spells you wrought with your trans-  
forming glow !  
O London drabness bathed in lucent heat !  
O Mansions of the late Queen Anne, and O  
Buckingham Palace (also Wimpole Street) !  
O laughing skies traditionally sad !  
O barometric forecasts never " rainy " !  
O balmy days, and *noctes*, let me add,  
*Ambrosianae !*

46      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And if your weather brought the strikers out  
    And turned to desert-brown the verdant plot ;  
If civic fathers, who are often stout,  
    Murmured at times, " This is a bit too hot ! "  
If the slow blood of rural swains has stirred  
    When stating what their views about the crops  
    is,  
Or jammy lips have flung some bitter word  
    At this year's wopses ;—

What then ? You may have missed the happy  
    mean,  
    But by excess of virtue's ample store,  
Proving your lavish heart was over-keen,  
    And for that fault I love you yet the more ;  
Nay, had you been more temperate in your zeal,  
    I should have lacked the best of all your  
    giving—  
The thirst, the lovely thirst, that made me feel  
    Life worth the living.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

Sept. 20, 1911.

## A Failure of Sympathy

When the dead leaves adown the lane are hurried,  
 And all the dells are bare and bonfires smoke,  
 The bard (by rights) should be extremely worried,  
 He ought not to evolve a single joke,  
 But wander, woods among, a pale down-hearted  
 bloke.

And I (of old) have felt the chestnuts patter  
 Like sounds of nails upon my coffin-lid ;  
 My landlady, disturbed about the matter,  
 Asked if I liked my food ; I said I did ;  
 But told her where I ailed, and why Joy's face  
 was hid.

" The flowers," I said, " are gone ; once more  
 Proserpina  
 Is rapt by Pluto to the iron gates ;  
 Can even hard-boiled eggs prolong the chirp in a  
 Poetic bosom at such awful dates ? "  
 And she said nothing, but removed the break-  
 fast plates.

48        POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

But now (I know not why) I feel quite jolly ;  
    The ways are thick with mire, the woods are  
        sere ;  
The rain is falling, I have lost my brolly,  
    Yet still my aptitude for song and cheer  
    Seems unaffected by the damp. It's deuced  
        queer.

And when I wander by the leafless spinneys  
    I notice as a mere phenomenon  
The way they've moulted ; I would give two  
    guineas  
    To feel the good old thrill, but ah, it's gone :  
    I neither weep nor tear my hair ; I just move  
        on.

I quite enjoy my meals (it seems like treason) ;  
    Far other was the case in days of yore,  
When every mood of mine subserved the season—  
    Mirth for the flowery days, and mirth no more  
    When Summer ended and her garlands choked  
        the floor.

You bid me take my fill of joy, dear reader,  
 And hang repining ! but I dread my bliss ;  
 If I can prove myself a hearty feeder,  
 Saying to tea-shop fairs, "Two crumpets, Miss,"  
 What time Demeter's daughter feels that icy  
 kiss,

Shall I be some day cold to Nature's laughter ?  
 Shall I no longer leap and shout and sing  
 And shake with vernal odes the echoing rafter,  
 When at the first warm flush of amorous Spring  
 The woodlands shine again ? That *would* be  
 sickening.

E. G. V. KNOX.

Nov. 1, 1911.

## To Santa Claus

Historic Santa ! Seasonable Claus !  
 Whose bulging sack is pregnant with delight ;  
 Who comest in the middle of the night  
 To stuff distracting playthings in the maws  
 Of stockings never built for infant shins,  
 Suspended from the mantelpiece by pins.

P.P.

D

Thou who on earth was naméd Nicholas—  
There be dull clods who doubt thy magic power  
To tour the sleeping world in half-an-hour,  
And pop down all the chimneys as you pass  
With woolly lambs and dolls of frabjous size  
For grubby hands and wonder-laden eyes.

Not so thy singer, who believes in thee  
Because he has a young and foolish spirit ;  
Because the simple faith that bards inherit  
Of happiness is still the master key,  
Opening life's treasure-house to whoso clings  
To the dim beauty of imagined things.

Wherefore, good Kringle, do not pass me by,  
Who am too old, alas ! for trains and blocks,  
But stuff the Love of Beauty in my socks  
And Childlike Faith to last me till I die ;  
And there 'll be room, I doubt not, in the toes  
For Magic Cap and Spectacles of Rose.

And not a song of beauty, sung of old,  
Or saga of the dead heroic days,

## TO SANTA CLAUS

51

And not a blossom laughing by the ways,  
Or wind of April blowing on the wold  
But in my heart shall have the power to stir  
The shy communion of the worshipper.

Hark ! On the star-bright highways of the sky  
Light hoofs beat and the far-off sleigh-bell  
sounds !

Is it old Santa on his gracious rounds  
Or one dead legend drifting sadly by ?  
Not mine to say. And, though I long to peep,  
Santa shall always find me fast asleep.

C. H. BRETHERTON.

Dec. 26, 1917.

## In Winter

Boreas blows on his high wood whistle,  
Over the coppice and down the lane  
Where the goldfinch chirps from the haulm of the  
thistle  
And mangolds gleam in the farmer's wain.



52 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Last year's dead and the new year sleeping  
Under its mantle of leaves and snow ;  
Earth holds beauty fast in her keeping  
But Life invincible stirs below.

Runs the sap in each root and rhizome,  
Primrose yellow and snowdrop cold,  
Windyflowers when the chiffchaff flies home,  
Lenten lilies with crowns of gold.  
Soon the woods will be blithe with bracken,  
April whisper of lambs at play ;  
Spring will triumph—and our old black hen  
(Thank the Lord !) will begin to lay.

C. H. BRETHERTON.

Jan. 22, 1919.

# *Sport*



## Huntin' Weather

There 's a dog-fox down in Lannigan's spinney  
    (And Lannigan's wife has hens to mourn) ;  
The hunters stamp in their stalls and whinny,  
    Soft with leisure an' fat with corn.

The colts are pasturin', bold an' lusty,  
    Sleek they are with their coats aglow,  
Ripe to break, but the bits grow rusty  
    And the saddles sit in a dusty row.

Old O'Dwyer was here a-Monday  
    With a few grey gran'fathers out for a field  
(Like the ghostly hunt of a dead-an'-done day),  
    They—an' some lassies that giggled an'  
        squealed.

The houn's they rioted like the devil  
    (They ran a hare an' they killed a goose) ;  
I cursed Caubeen, but he looked me level :  
    " The boys are away—so what's the use ? "

The mists lie clingin' on bog an' heather,  
    Haws hang red on the silver thorn ;  
It's huntin' weather, ay, huntin' weather,  
    But trumpets an' bugles have beat the horn !

CROSBIE GARSTIN.

Jan. 5, 1916.

### A February Trout-Fancy

Now are the days ere the crocus  
    Peeps in the Park,  
Eer the first snowdrops invoke us,  
    Ere the brown lark  
Hymns over headland and heather  
Spring and her riot of weather,  
Days when the East winds are moaning together,  
    Dreary and dark !

Still, just at times comes a hint of  
Softness that brings,  
Spite of the season, a glint of  
April's own wings :  
Violets hawked on the highway,  
West winds a-whoop down a byway,  
Silver clouds loose on the blue of their sky-way,  
Such are the things !

Yes, though old Winter o'ertake us  
Swiftly again,  
These are the portents that make us  
Pause by the pane—  
Windows where weavers of tackle  
Snare us with shows that unshackle  
Dreams, as we gaze upon tinsel and hackle,  
Greenheart and cane !

Visions of bud on the sallow,  
Swards in gay gown,  
Glimpses of pool and of shallow,  
Streams brimming down ;

58 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Wail of the wandering plover,  
Flute of the thrush in the cover,  
Swirl of the pounder that breaks, turning over  
At your March Brown !

Hark to the reel's sudden shrill of  
Line that 's ripped out,  
Feel the rod thrill with the thrill of  
Fate still in doubt,  
Till, where the shingles are showing,  
Yours are the rainbow tints glowing  
Crimson and gold on a lusty and knowing  
Devonshire trout !

Such are the fancies they throw us,  
Sun and soft air,  
Woven at windows that show us,  
Lingering there,  
Not the mere flies for our buying,  
Not only rods for our trying,  
But—if we 've eyes for it—all the undying  
Fun o' Spring Fair !

P. R. CHALMERS.

Feb. 9, 1910.

## At Putney

When eight strong fellows are out to row,  
With a slip of a lad to guide them,  
I warrant they'll make the light ship go,  
Though the coach on the launch may chide  
them,  
With his "Six, get on to it! Five, you're late!  
Don't hurry the slides, and use your weight!  
You're bucketing, Bow; and, as to Four,  
The sight of his shoulders makes me sore!"

But Stroke has steadied his fiery men,  
And the lift on the boat gets stronger;  
And the Coxswain suddenly shouts for "Ten!  
Reach out to it, longer, longer!"  
While the wind and the tide raced hand in  
hand  
The swing of the crew and the pace were grand;  
But now that the two meet face to face  
It's buffet and slam and a tortoise-pace.



60      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

For Hammersmith Bridge has rattled past,  
And, oh, but the storm is humming.  
The turbulent white steeds gallop fast ;  
They're tossing their crests and coming.  
It's a downright rackety, gusty day,  
And the backs of the crew are drenched in  
spray ;  
But it's " Swing, boys, swing till you're deaf and  
blind,  
And you'll beat and baffle the raging wind."

They have slipped through Barnes ; they are  
round the bend ;  
And the chests of the eight are tightening.  
" Now spend your strength, if you've strength to  
spend,  
And away with your hands like lightning !  
Well rowed !"—and the coach is forced to  
cheer—  
" Now stick to it, all, for the post is near !"  
And, lo, they stop at the coxswain's call,  
With its message of comfort, " Easy all !"

So here's to the sturdy undismayed  
Eight men who are bound together  
By the faith of the slide and the flashing blade  
And the swing and the level feather ;  
To the deeds they do and the toil they bear ;  
To the dauntless mind and the will to dare ;  
And the joyous spirit that makes them one  
Till the last fierce stroke of the race is done.

R. C. LEHMANN.

March 16, 1910.

### “ Gambol ”

I stood among the rapturous kennelled pack,  
Rejecting love from many a slobbering jaw,  
Caressing many a twisting mottled back  
And gripping here and there a friendly paw.  
But yet a well-known white-and-liver stern  
I sought in vain amid the dappled scramble.  
A sudden apprehension made me turn  
And say, “ Where's Gambol ? ”

62 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Gambol—a nailer on a failing scent,  
Leading by fifty yards across the plough !  
Gambol, who erst would riot and repent,  
Who loved to instigate a kennel row !  
Who 'd often profit by " a private view "  
" Huic-ing to him " incarnadined from cover,  
And when a " half-cooked hare " sat squatting, who  
Through roots would shove her !

I turned with mute inquiry in my eyes,  
Dire rumours of distemper made me dumb,  
The kennel huntsman, chary of replies,  
Behind his shoulder jerked a horny thumb.  
Such silence, though familiar, boded ill ;  
With doubts and fears increasing every minute,  
I paused before a doorway—all was still  
As death within it.

Gambol was stretched upon a truss of hay,  
But not the ruthless hound that I had known.  
That snarling terrorist of many a fray  
Now at my feet lay low, but not alone,

Then rose to greet me—slowly shaking free  
 Four sleek round shapes that piped a puling  
 twitter—  
 And fawned, half shamed, half proud for me to see  
 Her brand-new litter.

MISS JESSIE POPE.

March 20, 1912.

" The Little Foxes "

This was a wisdom that SOLOMON said  
 In a garden of citron and roses red,  
 A word he wove, where his grey apes played,  
 In the rhyme he strung for love of a maid ;  
 Thus went his learning, most discerning,  
 Thus he sang of his old designs,  
 " Take us the foxes—little foxes,  
 Little dog-foxes that spoil the vines ! "

(Though SOLOMON never since he was born  
 Had heard the twang of a huntsman's horn,  
 Killing his foxes, so I'll be bound,  
 Without the help of a horse or hound,

Still down the ages, this his sage's  
Word with gallanter meaning shines,  
When we take foxes, little foxes,  
Little dog-foxes that spoil the vines !)

So when the morn hangs misty now  
Where the grass shows never a patch of plough,  
Hark to the cry on the spruce-crowned hill,  
For SOLOMON'S wisdom is working still ;  
Hark to the singing voices flinging,  
White sterns waving among the pines,  
All for the foxes—little foxes,  
Little dog-foxes that spoil the vines.

The lift of a cap at the cover side,  
A thud of hoofs in a squelchy ride,  
And the pack is racing a breast-high scent  
Like a shadow cloud o'er a windy bent !  
Customer cunning—full of running,  
Never a moment the game declines ;  
Thus are the foxes—little foxes,  
Little dog-foxes that spoil the vines.

So it 's afternoon, and eight miles away  
 That beat, dead-weary and stiff with clay  
 A tired mask, set for a distant whin,  
 Is turned on Death with a brigand grin !  
     There by the paling, wet brush trailing,  
         Still he bares them his lips' long lines ;  
 So die the foxes—little foxes,  
     Little dog-foxes that spoil the vines.

This was the wisdom that SOLOMON made  
 In a garden of citron and almug shade,  
 That a man and a horse might find them fun  
 Wherever the little dog-foxes run,  
     Since of his meaning we 've been gleaning,  
         Since we 've altered his old designs,  
 All about foxes—little foxes,  
     Little dog-foxes that spoil the vines !

P. R. CHALMERS.

April 3, 1912.

To a Cuckoo, Heard on the Links

Bohemian spirit ! unencumbered by Penates,  
And sole performer of the woodland band  
Whose contributions I can recognise with great  
ease,  
Let others count you shifting as the sand,  
But surely underneath that bosom black-  
barred  
There lurks a sentiment that I (the hack-  
bard)  
Can fully comprehend. So, cuckoo, here 's my  
hand.

Not for the sake of ease you flit about the copses  
And bid your partner to an alien care,  
Entrust the incubation of her popsy-wopsies,  
Planting the eggy mites at unaware ;  
But art, the voice of art, is ever calling.  
How could CARUSO sing with infants squall-  
ing ?  
To fetter genius is to drive it to despair.

Should I not turn also my heartstrings to macadam?

I too deposit, whereso'er I could,

A host of unmelodious babies (if I had 'em)

Or in the kindly shelter of some wood

(With robins), or whatever *crèche* was going,

Soon as I felt the inspiration flowing,

The bubbling in my brain-pan? Yes, by Jove,

I should.

'Tis therefore that I sometimes wonder when I  
hear you

Fulfil the valley with that vagrant noise,

Now by the holm-oak yonder, now beside this  
near yew

(Unhampered as you are by household ploys),

Why you have never hit on something neater,

Some outburst less monotonous of metre,

Less easy to be aped by unregenerate boys.

Is it perhaps that, like that other star, the throistle,

Simply to prove your throat can stand the strain,

You too keep on, the Spring's repetitive apostle,

Piping your pæan till it haunts the brain?



68            POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

I cannot say.    But what I find so sad is  
One never knows if you or if the caddies  
Are making all that rumpus.    There it goes  
again !

E. G. V. KNOX.

April 21, 1909.

### The First Game

There comes a Day (I can hear it coming),  
One of those glorious deep-blue days,  
When larks are singing and bees are humming,  
And Earth gives voice in a thousand ways—  
Then I, my friends, I too shall sing,  
And hum a foolish little thing,  
And whistle like (but not too like) a blackbird in  
the Spring.

There looms a Day (I can feel it looming ;  
Yes, it will be in a month or less),  
When all the flowers in the world are blooming  
And Nature flutters her fairest dress—

Then I, my friends, I too shall wear  
A blazer that will make them stare,  
And brush—this is official : I shall also brush  
my hair.

It is the day that I watch for yearly,  
Never before has it come so late ;  
But now I 've only a month—no, merely  
A couple of fortnights left to wait ;  
And then (to make the matter plain)  
I hold—at last !—a bat again :  
Dear HOBBS ! the weeks this summer—think !  
the *weeks* I 've lived in vain !

I see already the first ball twisting  
Over the green as I take my stand,  
I hear already long-on insisting  
It wasn't a chance that came to hand—  
Or no ; I see it miss the bat  
And strike me on the knee, whereat  
Some fool, some silly fool at point, says blandly,  
“ How was that ? ”

Then, scouting later, I hold a hot 'un  
At deep square-leg from the local FRY,  
And at short mid-on to the village SCOTTON  
I snap a skimmer some six-foot high—  
Or else, perhaps, I get the ball,  
Upon the thumb, or not at all,  
Or right into the hands, and then, lorblessme, let  
it fall.

But what care I? It's the game that calls me—  
Simply to be on the field of play;  
How can it matter what fate befalls me,  
With ten good fellows and one good day?  
... But still,  
I rather hope spectators will,  
Observing any lack of skill,  
Remark, "This is his first appearance." Yes,  
I *hope* they will.

A. A. MILNE.

July 6, 1910.

## Inland Golf

I hate the dreadful hollow, in the shade of the little  
wood,  
Its lips in the grass above are bearded with  
flame-gold whin ;  
I have tried to forget the past, to play the shot as  
I should,  
But echo there, however I put it, answers me,  
“ In ! ”

For there in that ghastly pit long years ago I was  
found,  
Playing the sad three-more, interring the  
sphere where it fell ;  
Mangled and flattened and hacked and dinted  
deep in the ground,  
My ball had the look that is joy to the loafer  
with balls to sell.

Down at the foot of the cliff, whose shadow makes  
dusk of the dawn,  
Maddened I stood and muttered, making a  
friend of despair ;  
Then out I climbed while the wind that had  
tricked me began to fawn,  
Politely removing the sand that had made a  
mat of my hair.

Why do they prate of the blessings of golf on an  
inland course  
Where the " pretty " is but the plain, the  
" rough," prehensile hay,  
That yields up the ball (if at all) to a reckless *tour*  
*de force*,  
And mocks with rippling mirth your search in  
it day by day.

And the lost-ball madness flushes up in the  
12-man's head,  
When the breeze brings down the impatient,  
contemptuous " Fore ! "

Till he gives it up at last and, dropping another  
instead,  
Envies those fortunate folk, the dead, who  
need golf no more.

R. K. Risk.

July 12, 1911.

## To an Unknown Deer

[Somewhere above the head of Loch Fyne.]

King of the treeless forest, lo, I come !  
This is to let you have the welcome news  
That you will shortly hear my bullet's hum  
Shatter Argyll amid her mountain dews ;  
Will hear, from hill to hill, its rumour fly  
To startle (if the wind be not contráry)  
The tripper gathering picture-postcards by  
The pier at Inveraray.

This is your funeral, my friend, not mine,  
So play the game, for slackness I abhor ;  
Give me a broadside target, large and fine,  
A hundred paces off—don't make it more ;

74 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

If in a sitting posture when we meet,  
You mustn't think of moving ; stay quite steady  
Or (better) rise, and standing on your feet  
Wait there till I am ready.

Lurk not in hollows where you can't be found,  
Or let the local colour mock my search ;  
But take the sky-line ; choose the sort of ground  
That shows you up as obvious as a church ;  
Don't skulk among your hinds, or use for scouts  
The nimble progeny of last year's harem  
To bring reports upon my whereabouts  
In case I chance to scare 'em.

If I should perforate you in a place  
Not strictly vital, but from that rude shock  
Death must ensue, don't run and hide your face,  
But let me ease you with another knock ;  
And if, by inadvertence, I contrive  
Initially to miss you altogether,  
Stand till I empty out my clip of five,  
Or make you bite the heather.

As for your points, I take a snobbish view :  
I dearly love a stag of Royal stuff ;  
But, if a dozen's more than you can do,  
Ten (of the best) will suit me well enough ;  
As for your weight, I want a bulky beast,  
That I may win a certain patron's benison,  
Loading his board, to last a week at least,  
With whiffy slabs of venison.

Finally, be a sportsman ; try to play  
Your part in what should prove a big success ;  
Let me repeat—don't keep too far away ;  
My distance is a hundred yards (or less) ;  
So, ere the eager gillies ope your maw,  
I'll say, in tones to such occasions proper,  
The while I drink your death in usquebagh,  
“ He is indeed a topper ! ”

Nor shall that sentence be your sole reward ;  
Our mutual prowess in the fatal Glen  
Your headpiece, stuffed and mounted, shall record  
And be the cynosure of envious men ;



76      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And when they see that segment of the bag,  
    And want the tale again and I must tell it,  
I'll say how stoutly, like a well-bred stag,  
    You stopped the soft-nosed pellet.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

Sept. 14, 1910.

### Medalitis

In the full height and glory of the year,  
    When husbandmen are housing golden sheaves,  
Before the jealous frost has come to shear  
    From the bright woodland its reluctant leaves,  
I pass within a gateway, where the trees,  
    Tall, stately, multi-coloured, manifold,  
Draw the eye on as to some Chersonese,  
    Spanning the pathway with their arch of gold.

A river sings and loiters through the grass,  
    Girdling a pleasance scythed and trimly shorn ;  
And here I watch men vanish and repass  
    To the last hour of eve from early morn ;

Dryads peer out at them, and goat-foot Pan  
Plays on his pipe to their unheeding ears ;  
They pass, like pilgrims in a caravan,  
Towards some Mecca in the far-off years.

Blind to the woodland's autumn livery,  
Blind to the emerald pathway that they tread,  
Deaf to the river's low-pitched lullaby,  
Their limbs are quick and yet their souls are  
dead ;  
Nothing to them the song of any bird,  
For them in vain were horns of Elfland wound,  
Blind, deaf and stockfish-mute ; for, in a word,  
They are engaged upon a Medal Round.

Making an anxious torment of a game  
Whose humours now intrigue them not at all,  
They chase the flying wraith of printed fame,  
With card and pencil arithmetical ;  
With features pinched into a painful frown  
Looming misfortunes they anticipate,  
Or, as the fatal record is set down,  
Brood darkly on a detrimental 8.

78      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

These are in thrall to Satan, who devised  
Pencil and card to tempt weak men to sin,  
Whereby their prowess might be advertised—  
Say, 37 Out and 40 In ;  
Rarely does any victim break his chains  
And from his nape the lethal burden doff—  
The man with medal virus in his veins  
Seldom outlives it and gets back to Golf.

R. K. Risk.

Oct. 2, 1912.

## My First Flight

Stranded at Brighton and bored to monotony,  
Sadly I roamed by the crowd-haunted shore ;  
Fed up with bathing and boating and botany,  
Languidly humming the strains of " Asthore " ;  
Then, in the offing, descended an aeroplane,  
Gaily the pilot came striding my way ;  
" 'Afternoon, Sir ! " he exclaimed. " Would you  
dare a 'plane  
Voyage to-day ? "

Turning, I gazed with an eye that was critical  
At the contraption of fabric and wires ;  
Flying 's a game which my friends in the City call  
Simply gilt-edged—it uplifts and inspires.  
Holiday-makers stood by in expectancy,  
Cinema merchants rushed up with their reels ;  
“ Go it ! ” cried somebody ; “ go an’ get wrecked  
an’ see  
Just how it feels.”

I who had fought for a seat in an omnibus  
Surely could never recoil from a 'plane ?  
There, newly painted, she stood like a Romney 'bus,  
Bidding me soar through the vasty inane.  
Breathing a prayer for myself and my Fatherland  
Swiftly I scrambled aboard (the First Act) ;  
Upward we soared till I felt I would rather land  
Promptly—intact.

Swift rushed the air and the engine was thunderous,  
“ Say, shall I stunt you ? ” the pilot then roared.  
Clouds were above us and Brighton was under us ;  
Peace reigned below—there was Panic on board.

Fiercely pulsed my turbulent heart inside,  
 Fiercely we skidded and stunted and swayed ;  
 Grimly I crouched in that brute of a Martinsyde—  
 Dazed and dismayed.

Every mad moment seemed in its intensity  
 More than a cycle of slow-moving years ;  
 Finally I, in a state of dumb density,  
 Reached *terra firma* mid hurricane cheers.  
 Since I've decided that nothing can justify  
 Passenger flights in a nerve-racking 'plane ;  
*Others* may welcome the sport, but I'm cussed if I  
 Try it again.

G. R. SAMWAYS.

Aug. 13, 1919.

## On Mixed Shooting

Let my Bettina take it not amiss  
 Nor deem that from my side I wish to shove  
 her  
 If I forego the too, too poignant bliss

Of her adjacence in the hedgerow's cover,  
 Where I propose to lurk  
 And do among the driven birds some deadly work.

Linked in the dance, you cannot be too near,  
 Nor where the waves permit our joint  
 immersion ;  
 Dinners or theatres yield an added cheer  
 With you beside me to afford diversion  
 From thoughts of play or platter,  
 And not of fundamental things that really matter.

But here, where my immortal soul, afire  
 With fervour savouring almost of religion,  
 Fain would pursue, unvexed, its one desire—  
 To down the partridge or the errant pigeon,  
 What if you stood (or sat)  
 Close by and asked me if I liked your latest hat ?

I could not bear it ; you would sap my nerve ;  
 My hand and eye would cease to work  
 together ;

I could not rightly gauge the covey's swerve,

P.P.

F

82      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And, swinging round to spray the rearmost  
feather,  
I might mislay my wits  
And blow your smart confection into little bits.

Go rather where he stands, a field away,  
Yon youth who likes himself ; go there, my  
Betty,  
Beguile his vision ; round his trigger lay  
"One strangling golden hair" (D. G.  
ROSSETTI).  
That ought to spoil his feats  
And keep him fairly quiet in between the beats.

But later, when the luncheon-hour is come,  
Be near me all you will ; for then your  
prattle  
Will be most welcome with its pleasant hum  
So out of place amid the stress of battle ;  
Over an Irish stew,  
With "Bristol cream" to top it, I am *tout à*  
*vous*.

Not that your virtues have no higher use ;  
Such gifts would grace the loftiest position ;  
But where the birds come down wind like the  
deuce

I mark the limit of your woman's mission ;

In other circs, elsewhere,

" A ministering angel thou " ; but not just there.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

Oct. 11, 1911.

## Southward

When against the window-pane tap the fingers of  
the rain,

An ill rain, a chill rain, dripping from the eaves,

When the farmers haul their logs and the marsh  
is whisht with fogs,

And the wind sighs like an old man, brushing  
withered leaves ;

When the Summertime is gone and the Winter  
creeping on,

The doleful Northern winter of snow and sleet  
and hail,



84      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Then I smell the salty brine and I see you, ship o'  
mine,  
Bowling through the sunshine under all plain  
sail.

I can see you, Lady love, the Trade clouds strung  
above,  
White clouds, bright clouds, flocking South  
with you ;  
Like snowy lily buds are the flowery foaming suds  
That bloom about your forefoot as you tread  
the meadows blue.  
Oh the diamond Southern Cross ! Oh the  
wheeling albatross !  
Oh the shoals of silver flying-fish that skim  
beside the rail !  
Though my body's in the North still my heart  
goes faring forth  
Bowling through the sunshine under all plain  
sail.

C. H. BRETHERTON.

Dec. 6, 1916.

## The Last Cock-Pheasant

Splendour, whom lately on your glowing flight  
Athwart the chill and cheerless winter-skies  
I marked and welcomed with a futile right,  
And then a futile left, and strained my eyes  
To see you so magnificently large,  
Sinking to rest beyond the fir-wood's marge—

Not mine, not mine the fault ; despise me not  
In that I missed you ; for the sun was down,  
And the dim light was all against the shot ;  
And I had booked a bet of half-a-crown.  
My deadly fire is apt to be upset  
By many causes—always by a bet.

Or had I overdone it with the sloes,  
Snared by their home-picked brand of ardent gin  
Designed to warm a shivering sportsman's toes  
And light a fire his reckless head within ?  
Or did my silly loader put me off  
With aimless chatter with regard to golf ?

86 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

You too, I think, displayed a lack of nerve ;  
You did not quite—now did you ?—play the  
game ;

For when you saw me you were seen to swerve,  
Doubtless in order to disturb my aim.

No, no, you must not ask me to forgive  
A swerve because you basely planned to live.

At any rate, I missed you, and you went,  
The last day's absolutely final bird,  
Scathless, and left me very ill content ;  
And someone (was it I ?) pronounced a word,  
A word which rather forcible than nice is,  
A little word which does not rhyme with Isis.

Farewell ! I may behold you once again  
When next November's gales have stripped the  
leaf.

Then, while your upward flight you grandly strain,  
May I be there to add you to my sheaf ;  
And may they praise your tallness, saying " This  
Was such a bird as men are proud to miss ! "

R. C. LEHMANN.

Jan. 25, 1911.

## Labuntur Anni

[To a Chital Head on the Wall of a London Club.]

Light in the East, the dawn wind singing,  
Solemn and grey and chill,  
Rose in the sky, with Orion swinging  
Down to the distant hill ;  
The grass dew-pearled and the *mohwa* shaking  
Her scented petals across the track,  
And the herd astir to the new day breaking—  
Gods ! How it all comes back.

So it was, and on such a morning  
Somebody's bullet sped,  
And you, as you called to the herd a warning,  
Dropped in the grasses dead ;  
And some stout hunter's heart was brimming  
For joy that the gods of sport were good—  
With a lump in his throat and his eyes a-dimming,  
As the eyes of sportsmen should ;—

As mine have done in the springtime running,  
As mine in the halcyon days  
Ere trigger-finger had lapsed from cunning  
Or foot from the forest ways,

88      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

When I'd wake with the stars and the sunrise  
meeting

In the dewy fragrance of myrrh and musk,  
Peacock and spurfowl sounding a greeting  
And the jungle mine till dusk.

You take me back to the valleys of laughter,  
The hills that hunters love,  
The sudden rain and the sunshine after,  
The cloud and the blue above,  
The morning mist and creatures crying,  
The beat in the drowsy afternoon,  
Clear-washed eve with the sunset dying,  
Night and the hunter's moon.

Not till all trees and jungles perish  
Shall we go back that way  
To those dear hills that the hunters cherish,  
Where the hearts of the hunters stay ;  
So you dream on of the ancient glories,  
Of water-meadows and hinds and stags,  
While I and my like tell old, old stories . . .  
Ah ! but it drags—it drags.

C. HILTON BROWN.

April 14, 1920.

*School*



## “ Commem.”

Fair ladies, why don't you direct us  
What hour you are coming from Town  
In the toilets that ravage the masculine *pectus*,  
The bonnets that knock a man down ?  
Silky and summery flounces and flummery,  
Gossamer muslins and lawns,  
With the spring in your air and a rose in your hair  
And a step that is light as a fawn's ?

Our Fellows, both clergy and laity,  
Leaving their sheltering oaks,  
In a rapture of light irresponsible gaiety  
Burst into flannels and jokes ;  
The Dean is canoeing, the Bursar is wooing,  
The Junior Proctor you 'll find  
In a sumptuous punt with a damsel in front  
And a Bull-dog to push from behind.



Ah, moist are our meadows, but moister  
My lip at the thought of it all !  
Soft ripple of dresses that flow in the cloister,  
Girl laughter that rings on the wall !  
But avaunt, trepidation ! it's time for the station ;  
I'm glad that my trousers are pressed ;  
For I think you'll arrive by the 4.45,  
And I want to be looking my best.

G. W. ARMITAGE.

June 28, 1911.

### A Ramshackle Room

When the gusts are at play with the trees on the  
lawn,  
And the lights are put out in the vault of the  
night ;  
When within all is snug, for the curtains are drawn,  
And the fire is aglow and the lamps are alight,  
Sometimes, as I muse, from the place where I am  
My thoughts fly away to a room near the Cam.

'Tis a ramshackle room, where a man might  
complain

Of a slope in the ceiling, a rise in the floor ;  
With a view on a court and a glimpse on a lane,  
And no end of cool wind through the chinks of  
the door ;

With a deep-seated chair that I love to recall,  
And some groups of young oarsmen in shorts on  
the wall.

There 's a fat jolly jar of tobacco, some pipes—  
A meerschaum, a briar, a cherry, a clay—  
There 's a three-handled cup fit for Audit or Swipes  
When the breakfast is done and the plates  
cleared away.

There 's a litter of papers, of books a scratch lot,  
Such as *Plato*, and *Dickens*, and *Liddell* and *Scott*.

And a crone in a bonnet that 's more like a rag  
From a mist of remembrance steps suddenly out ;  
And her funny old tongue never ceases to wag  
As she tidies the room where she bustles about ;  
For a man may be strong and a man may be young,  
But he can't put a drag on a Bedmaker's tongue.

And, oh, there's a youngster who sits at his ease  
In the hope, which is vain, that the tongue may  
run down,  
With his feet on the grate and a book on his knees,  
And his cheeks they are smooth and his hair  
it is brown.  
Then I sigh myself back to the place where I am  
From that ramshackle room near the banks of the  
Cam.

R. C. LEHMANN.

Feb. 9, 1910.

## Cambridge in Kharki

[Impressions of an absent Alumnus.]

Since 1642, when CROMWELL (late  
Of Sidney Sussex), constitution-wrecker,  
Sat on the Cam to keep the college plate  
From drifting into CHARLES's low exchequer,  
No shattering battle-blast has shocked the walls  
Of these enchanted halls.

But now their hoary shrines and hallowed shade  
Provide the billets for a camp's headquarters ;  
An army, bedded out on King's Parade,  
Usurps the wonted haunt of gowns and mortars,  
Even adopts—a wanton thing to do—  
The blessed name of “ Blue ” !

The paths where pensive scholars paced at ease  
Ring to the hustling clank of spurs and sabres ;  
The ploughshare, forged for pale examinees,  
Forgets its usual academic labours  
And, commandeered for ends unknown before,  
Turns to a tool of war.

The buttery becomes a mere canteen ;  
Upon the daïs whence the Johnian fellow  
Pities the undergraduate's rude cuisine  
(His own condition verging on the mellow),  
Foreign attachés eat the local swans  
Bred for the use of dons.

I see the grass of many an ancient court  
All divots where the cavalry has pawed it ;  
I see the thirsty aides-de-camp resort

Therewhere the Trinity fountain runs with audit;  
I see the Reverend MONTAGU, Chief BUTLER,  
Acting as army sutler !

Those swards that grace his own familiar quad,  
Where only angels (looking in from Ely),  
Angels and dons alone, till now have trod—  
There I remark the War-Lord, Colonel SEELY,  
Brazenly tramping, under martial law,  
Dead to a sense of awe.

Where mid her storied reeds old Granta flows  
Profane vedettes discuss the morrow's mêlée ;  
On Parker's sacred Piece the troopers dose,  
And, when the sudden bugle sounds reveille,  
Feed their indifferent chargers on the dew  
Ambrosial of the Muse.

And what is this strange object like a whale  
In Jesus Close ? None ever thought to meet a  
Monster like that, on such a bulgy scale  
(Not though it bore the classic sign of " Beta "),  
Lashed for the night in yon Elysian lair—  
Not there, my child, not there.

The peaceful pedant by his well-trimmed lamp,  
Dimly aware of this adjacent bogie,  
Protests against the horrors of a camp  
And *Cur*, he asks, *cur cedunt armis togae* ?  
And the same thought is echoed on the lips  
Of bedders and of gyps.

O Cambridge, home of Culture's pure delights,  
My fostering Mother, what a desecration !  
Yet England chose you (out of several sites)  
To be her bulwark and to save the nation ;  
Compared with this proud triumph you have won,  
Pray, what has Oxford done ?

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

Sept. 25, 1912.

## Oxford Revisited

Last week, a prey to military duty,  
I turned my lagging footsteps to the West ;  
I have a natural taste for scenic beauty,  
And all my pent emotions may be guessed  
To find myself again  
At Didcot, loathliest junction of the plain.

P.P.

G

98 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

But all things come unto the patient waiter,  
    "Behold!" I cried, "in yon contiguous blue  
Beetle the antique spires of Alma Mater  
    Almost exactly as they used to do  
    In 1898,  
When I became an undergraduate.

"O joys whereto I went as to a bridal,  
    With Youth's fair aureole clustering on a brow  
That no amount of culture (herpecidal)  
    Will coax the semblance of a crop from now,  
    Once more I make ye mine;  
    There is a train that leaves at half-past nine.

"In a rude land where life among the boys is  
    One long glad round of cards and coffin juice,  
And any sort of intellectual poise is  
    The constant butt of well-expressed abuse,  
    And it is no disgrace  
    To put a table-knife inside one's face,

"I have remembered picnics on the Isis,  
    Bonfires and bumps and BOFFIN's cakes and tea,

Nor ever dreamed a European crisis  
 Would make a British soldier out of me—  
 The mute inglorious kind  
 That push the beastly war on from behind.

“But here I am” (I mused) “and quad and cloister  
 Are beckoning to me with the old allure;  
 The lovely world of Youth shall be mine oyster  
 Which I for one-and-ninepence can secure,  
 Reaching on Memory’s wing  
 Parnassus’ groves and Wisdom’s fabled spring.”

But oh, the facts ! How doomed to disillusion  
 The dreams that cheat the mind’s responsive eye !  
 Where are the undergrads in gay profusion  
 Whose waistcoats made melodious the High,  
 All the *jeunesse dorée*  
 That shed the glamour of an elder day ?

Can this be Oxford ? And is that my college  
 That vomits khaki through its sacred gate ?  
 Are those the schools where once I aired my  
 knowledge



100      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Where nurses pass and ambulances wait ?  
Ah ! sick ones, pale of face,  
I too have suffered tortures in that place !

In Tom his quad the Bloods no longer flourish ;  
Balliol is bare of all but mild Hindoos ;  
The stalwart oars that Isis used to nourish  
Are in the trenches giving Fritz the Blues,  
    . And many a stout D.D.  
Is digging trenches with the V.T.C.

Why press the search when every hallowed close is  
Cluttered with youthful soldiers forming fours ;  
While the drum stutters and the bugler blows his  
Loud summons, and the hoarse bull-sergeant  
    roars,  
    While almost out of view  
The thrumming biplane cleaves the astonished  
    blue ?

It is a sight to stir the pulse of poet,  
These splendid youths with zeal and courage  
    fired.

But as for Private Me, M.A.—why, blow it !  
 The very sight of soldiers makes me tired ;  
 Learning—detached, apart—  
 I sought, not War's reverberating art.

Vain search ! But see ! One ancient institution  
 Still doing business at the same old stand ;  
 'Tis Messrs. Barclay's Bank, or I'm a Proossian,  
 That erst dispensed my slender cash-in-hand ;  
 I'll borrow of their pelf  
 And buy some War Loan to console myself.

C. H. BRETHERTON.

Feb. 21, 1917.

## Breaking-Up Song

Now, when the ties that lightly bind us  
 Slacken awhile at the call of Home,  
 Leaving our latter-day science behind us,  
 Leaving the love of ancient Rome—

Ere we depart to enjoy for a season  
Freedom from regular work and rules,  
Come let us all in rhyme and reason  
Honour the best of schools.

Here's to our Founder, whose ancient bounty  
Freely bestowed with a pious care,  
Fostered the youth of his native county,  
Gave us a name we are proud to bear.  
Here's to his followers, wise gift-makers,  
Friends who helped when our numbers were  
few,  
Widened our walls and enlarged our acres,  
Stablished the school anew.

Here's to our Head, in whom all centres,  
Ruling his realm with a kindly sway ;  
Here's to the Masters, our guides and mentors,  
Helpers in work and comrades in play ;  
Here's to the Old Boys, working their way up  
Out in the world on the ladder of Fame ;  
Here's to the New Boys, learning to play up,  
Ay, and to play the game.

## BREAKING-UP SONG

103

Time will bring us our seasons of trial,  
Seasons of joy when our ship arrives,  
Yet, whatever be writ on the dial,  
Now is the golden hour of our lives ;  
Now is the feast spread fair before us—  
None but slackers or knaves or fools  
Ever shall fail to swell the chorus,  
“ Here ’s to the best of schools.”

C. L. GRAVES and E. V. LUCAS.

March 13, 1912.



# *Metropolis*

105



## The Ideal Home

[With apologies to the progressive organisers of a certain Exhibition at Olympia.]

“ Before the thing ends,” I observed to my Lilian,

“ Let ’s hasten and see if it ’s true

That the Fortunate Isles and the Vale of Avilion

Are dumped at Olympia. Do.”

And Lilian said, “ Thos,

Happy thought ! ” and it was ;

But that very same day it occurred to a million

Intelligent Londoners too.

There were hangings and curtains and carpets  
and ranges

For kitchens, and cauldrons and pots,

And vacuum-cleaners and servant-exchanges,

And toys for the infantile tots.



There were homes of the Russ  
 Which would not do for us ;  
 There was furniture taken from futurist granges  
 At Hanwell and similar spots.

There were baths with gold taps and a malachite  
 stopper,  
 And one with a card that explained  
 It was open to all who expended a copper  
 To fill it and try it. But, trained  
 As we were in the rules  
 Of Victorian schools,  
 Neither Lilian nor I thought that that would be  
 proper,  
 And so we severely refrained.

There were rooms which suggested the time when  
 the slattern  
 Should trouble no longer, and all  
 Should be comfort and peace in the empire of  
 Saturn,  
 But oh, it was hot in that hall !

And "Lilian," said I,

"I could drop. Let us buy  
That brace of armchairs of a willowy pattern,  
And rest by the side of this stall."

But Lilian said "No." The implacable faces  
Of constables frowned. With a sob  
We turned us away from that palmy oasis  
And went and had tea for a bob.

That was helpful, no doubt,  
But before we got out  
Through the ranks of the ravenous, squealing for  
places,  
We all but expired in the mob.

"This is closer," said Lil, "than the bell of a diver."

"It's awful," I answered, "my sweet;  
Any room in this show would be dear at a fiver,  
Compared with our worst. Let us fleet."

So I hastened to nab  
A well-oiled taxicab,  
And "The Ideal Home," I remarked to the driver,  
And mentioned our number and street.

October 29, 1913.

E. G. V. KNOX.

## Ghosts of Paper

Should you go down Ludgate Hill,  
As I'm sure you sometimes will,  
When the dark comes soft and new,  
Smudged and smooth and powder-blue,  
And the lights on either hand  
Run away to reach the Strand ;  
And the winter rains that stream  
Make the pavements glance and gleam ;  
There you'll see the wet roofs rise  
Packed against the lamp-lit skies,  
And at once you shall look down  
Into an enchanted town.  
Jewelled Fleet Street, golden gay,  
Sloughs the drab of work-a-day,  
Conjuring before you then  
All her ghosts of ink and pen,  
Striking from her magic mint  
Places you have loved in print,  
From the fairy towns and streets  
Raised by Djinn and fierce Afreets,

## GHOSTS OF PAPER

III

To the columned brass that shone  
On the gates of Babylon ;  
You shall wander, mazed, amid  
Pylon, palm, and pyramid ;  
You shall see, where taxis throng,  
River lamps of old Hong Kong ;  
See the ramparts standing tall  
Of the wondrous Tartar Wall ;  
See, despite of rain and wind,  
Marble towns of rosy Ind,  
And the domes and palaces  
Crowning Tripolis and Fez ;  
While, where buses churn and splash,  
There 's the ripple of a sash,  
Silken maid and paper fan  
And the peach-bloom of Japan ;  
But, the finest thing of all,  
You shall ride a charger tall  
Into huddled towns that haunt  
Picture-books of old Romaunt,  
Where go squire and knight and saint,  
Heavy limned in golden paint ;

You shall ride above the crowd  
On a courser pacing proud,  
In fit panoply and meet  
Through be-cobbled square and street,  
Where with bays and gestures bland  
Little brown-faced angels stand !

\* \* \* \*

These are some of things you 'll view  
When the night is blurred and blue,  
If you look down Ludgate Hill,  
As I 'm sure you often will !

P. R. CHALMERS.

Jan. 4, 1911.

### The Desert Optimist

An exile, I would fain forget  
That circumstance hath put me down  
Quite close to places like Tibet,  
But very far from London town.

And though the outlook 's rather drear  
I sometimes fancy I detect

A sort of Cockney atmosphere,  
A Metropolitan effect.

Behind my chair in solemn state  
The bearer and khansama stand,  
Swart replicas of those who wait  
In Piccadilly or the Strand.

My punkah brings a grateful wind  
To cheeks climatically brown'd,  
A fitful gust that calls to mind  
The draughts about the Underground.

And though they spoil my morning rest  
I like to lie awake and hark  
To parrakeets whose notes suggest  
Their captive kin in Regent's Park.

About my house the pigeons roost,  
They perch upon the compound walls,  
Own brothers to the friends who used  
To flap me greeting from St. Paul's.

In yellow waves the dawn-mist drives  
Across the paddy-field and jogs

P.P.

H

The memory of one who strives  
 To reconstruct his London fogs.  
 And when I hear a bullock-cart  
 Go rumbling 'neath its harvest truss  
 The echo wakens in my heart  
 The music of the omnibus.  
 And thus it is I've learned to find  
 A remedy for things that irk ;  
 My desert fades and with a kind  
 Of cinematographic jerk—

“ Urbs errat ante oculos ; ”  
 Then, Fortune, send me where you list,  
 I care not, London holds me close,  
 An exile, yet an optimist.

Aug. 2, 1911.

J. M. SYMNS.

## To a Bank of England Pigeon

Descendant of the doves of Aphrodite  
 Who fluttered in that type of beauty's train  
 And followed her affairs—the grave, the flighty,  
 Cooing in just your calm, uncaring strain,

TO A BANK OF ENGLAND PIGEON 115

Whether she thought to rid her of a rival,  
Or bring some laggard lover to her knees ;—  
I see you, Sir, the latter-day survival  
Of such fair plumèd satellites as these !

“ Bred in the bone,” perchance you know the  
motto !

And so you doubtless dream of tides that lace  
O’er snow-white sand by some blue Paphian  
grotto,

Or of your sires’ dark, murmurous, woodland  
Thrace ;

A penny whistle shrilling ’mid the traffic

May seem the goat-foot god’s own oaten trill,  
Till you shall think to hear the Maenads maffic  
In the upborne commotion of Cornhill !

And from your perch where sooty winds are  
striving,

O Bank Stock-dove, as o’er Hymettian bloom  
You yet may watch the busy bees a-hiving  
The sweet and subtle fragrance of the Boom,



116 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And see, as once before the Cyprian matron,  
The crowds that wait, obsequious and discreet,  
On her, your passionless and newer patron,  
The stern Old Lady of Threadneedle Street !

P. R. CHALMERS.

May 11, 1910.

### Left Smiling

It is the joyful time when out of town  
(For me a large red letter checks it)  
To sea and loch, to dale and windy down  
The public makes its annual exit,  
Deeming that they are dotty in the mind  
Who choose to stay behind.

" Exodus " is the tag the papers use,  
A Scriptural term from ancient Jewry,  
But I shall always steadily refuse  
To do like PHARAOH in his fury  
And fling my horse and chariot on their track  
To fetch the people back.

Poor crowded souls, who think that when they fare  
Forth to the briny, there to wallow,

They leave in London's every street and square  
An aching void, a yawning hollow.  
"Town," they observe, "is empty!" It is not :  
I still am on the spot.

They picture Beauty vanished from the Park,  
Clubland a waste for flies to buzz in,  
The Halls of Song and high Cinema dark,  
And here and there a country cousin  
Sharing with vagrant cat and mongrel dawg  
The putrid dust of Aug.

These are their views who shun the quiet shade  
And go *en masse* in search of glamour,  
Wash in the same sea, walk the same parade,  
Fill the same solitude with clamour,  
And on the same rock, in a fist like Fame's,  
Knife their confounded names.

So let them trip it where their neighbours press  
With loud excursion and alarum,  
And leave me London in her Summer dress  
Exquisite as the lily (*arum*)

118 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And fragrant with the absence, all too short,  
Of the more stuffy sort.

For then, when all the obvious people flit,  
The town unlocks her rarer treasures ;  
More freely, with companions few but fit,  
I taste the less obtrusive pleasures  
With which the Choicer Spirits keep in touch  
(As Editors and such).

Dearer I find than any change of scene  
The charm of old familiar places,  
When the dull obstacle that stood between  
Fades and reveals their hidden graces.  
London with half her Londoners removed  
Is very much improved.

*Enfin, j'y reste.* And, if some folk regard  
My conduct as a thing of beauty,  
Saying, " He stops in town, this virtuous bard,  
Because he loves the way of Duty,"  
Why, let them talk ; I shall not take the trouble  
To prick this wanton bubble.

July 31, 1912.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

## The Sitting Bard

[Lines addressed to one of those officials who charge you  
a copper for your seat in St. James's Park.]

Fellow, you have no *flair* for art, I fear,  
Who thus confound me with the idle Many—  
The loafer pensive o'er his betting rag,  
The messenger (express) with reeking fag,  
The nursemaid sighing for her bombardier—  
All charged the same pew-rate, a common penny.

I am an artist ; I am not as these ;  
He does me horrid despite who confuses  
My taste with theirs who come this way to  
chuck  
Light provender to some exotic duck,  
Whereas I sit beneath these secular trees  
In close collaboration with the Muses.

To me St. James's Park is holy ground ;  
In fancy I regard these glades as Helicon's ;  
This lake (although an artificial pond)  
To Hippocrene should roughly correspond ;

Others, not I, shall make its shores resound,  
 Bandyng chaff with yonder jaunty pelicans.

All this escaped you, lacking minstrel lore.  
 'Tis so with poets : men are blind and miss us ;  
 You did not mark my eye's exultant mood,  
 The inflated chest, the listening attitude,  
 Nor, bent above the mere, the look I wore  
 When lost in self-reflection—like Narcissus.

Else you could scarce have charged me for my seat ;  
 I must have earned an honorary session ;  
 For how could I have strained your solid chair,  
 I that am all pure spirit, fine as air,  
 And sit as light as when with wingéd feet  
 Mercury settles, leaving no impression ?

Well, take your paltry penny, trivial dun !  
 And bid your chair-contractors freely wallow  
 In luxury therewith ; but, when you find  
 Another in this hallowed seat reclined,  
 Squeeze him for tuppence, saying, "*Here sat one  
 On June the fifth and parleyed with Apollo.*"

June 11, 1913.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

## Nursery Rhymes of London Town

### KINGSWAY

Walking on the King's Way, lady, my lady,  
 Walking on the King's Way, will you go in red ?  
 With a silken wimple, and a ruby on your finger,  
 And a furry mantle trailing where you tread ?  
 Neither red nor ruby I'll wear upon the King's  
 Way ;

I will go in duffle grey with nothing on my head.

Walking on the King's Way, lady, my lady,  
 Walking on the King's Way, will you go in blue ?  
 With an ermine border, and a plume of peacock  
 feathers,  
 And a silver circlet, and a sapphire on your shoe ?  
 Neither blue nor sapphire I'll wear upon the  
 King's Way ;

I will go in duffle grey, and barefoot too.

Walking on the King's Way, lady, my lady,  
 Walking on the King's Way, will you go in green ?

122      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

With a golden girdle, and a pointed velvet slipper,  
And a crown of emeralds fit for a queen ?  
Neither green nor emerald I'll wear upon the  
    King's Way ;  
I will go in duffle grey so lovely to be seen,  
And Somebody will kiss me and call me his queen.  
    March 2, 1916.

HAYMARKET

I went up to the Hay-market upon a summer day,  
I went up to the Hay-market to sell a load of  
    hay—  
To sell a load of hay and a little bit over,  
And I sold it all to a pretty girl for a nosegay of  
    red clover.  
  
A nosegay of red clover and a hollow golden straw;  
Now wasn't that a bargain, the best you ever  
    saw ?  
I whistled on my straw in the market-place all day,  
And the London folk came flocking for to foot it  
    in the hay.

THE ANGEL

The Angel flew down  
One morning to town,  
But didn't know where to rest ;  
For they shut her out of the East End  
And they shut her out of the West.

The Angel went on  
To Islington,  
And there the people were kinder.  
If ever you go to Islington  
That 's where you will find her.

MISS E. FARJEON.

June 4, 1916.

The Booklover

By Charing Cross in London Town  
There runs a road of high renown,  
Where antique books are ranged on shelves  
As dark and dusty as themselves.



And many booklovers have spent  
Their substance there with great content,  
And vexed their wives and filled their homes  
With faded prints and massive tomes.

And ere I sailed to fight in France  
There did I often woo Romance,  
Searching for jewels in the dross,  
Along the road to Charing Cross.

But booksellers and men of taste  
Have fled the towns the Hun laid waste,  
And within Ypres Cathedral square  
I sought but found no bookshops there.

What little hope have books to dwell  
'Twixt Flemish mud and German shell ?  
Yet have I still upon my back,  
Hid safely in my haversack,

A tattered Horace, printed fine  
(Anchor and Fish, the printer's sign),  
Of sage advice, of classic wit ;  
Much wisdom have I gained from it.

And should I suffer sad mischance  
When Summer brings the Great Advance,  
I pray no cultured Bosch may bag  
My Aldus print to swell his swag.

Yet would I rather ask of Fate  
So to consider my estate,  
That I may live to loiter down  
By Charing Cross in London Town.

June 21, 1916.

NORMAN DAVEY.

### The Lanes leading down to the Thames

There are beautiful lanes leading down to the  
Thames  
By the meadows all studded with buttercup gems,  
Where the thrush and the blackbird and cuckoo all  
day  
Waft their songs on the incense of roses and may.  
But the lanes here in London, near warehouse and  
mart,  
Are as winding and steep and as dear to my heart ;

126      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Their mansions all mildewed in tenderest tones,  
With priceless old doorways by INIGO JONES.

Though the roadway is rough and the cobbles are  
hard,

There are plane-trees in leaf in St. Dunstan's  
churchyard,

And the twittering sparrows their parliament keep  
In the peaceful demesne where the citizens sleep.

Oh ! the sights and the sounds of those wonderful  
lanes,

The tramp of the horses, the creak of the cranes,  
Men fresh from the perils that lurk in the seas,  
The balm of the Indies that spices the breeze.

Crude critics find fault with the fish-porters' yells,  
The strength of the briny and orangey smells,  
But they're part of the charm of the lanes I hold  
dear,

"Harp," "Pudding" and "Idol," "Love,"  
"Water" and "Beer."

R. H. ROBERTS.

July 12, 1916.

## To a Dear Departed

[“Georgina,” the largest of the giant tortoises at the Zoo, has died. She was believed to be about two hundred and fifty years old.]

Winds blow cold and the rain, Georgina,  
Beats and gurgles on roof and pane ;  
Over the Gardens that once were green a  
Shadow stoops and is gone again ;  
Only a sob in the wild swine’s squeal  
Only the bark of the plunging seal,  
Only the laugh of the striped hyæna  
Muffled with poignant pain.

Long ago, in the mad glad May days,  
Woo’d I one who was with us still ;  
Bade him wake to the world’s blithe heydays,  
Leap in joyance and eat his fill ;  
Sang I, sweet as the bright-billed ousel, a  
Pæan of praise for thy pal, Methuselah.  
Ah ! he too in the Winter’s grey days  
Died of the usual chill.

He was old when the Reaper beckoned,  
 Ripe for the paying of Nature's debt ;  
 Forty score—if he 'd lived a second—  
 Years had flown, but he lingered yet ;  
 But you had gladdened this vale of tears  
 For a bare two hundred and fifty years ;  
 You, Georgina, we always reckoned  
 One of the younger set.

Winter's cold and the influenza  
 Wreaked and ravaged the ranks among ;  
 Bills that babbled a gay cadenza,  
 Snouts that snuffled and claws that clung—  
 Now they whistle and root and run  
 In Happy Valleys beyond the sun ;  
 Never back to the ponds and pens a  
 Sigh of regret is flung.

Flaming parrots and pink flamingoes,  
 Birds of Paradise, frail as fair ;  
 Monkeys talking a hundred lingoës,  
 Ring-tailed lemur and Polar bear—

TO A DEAR DEPARTED 129

Somehow our grief was not profound  
When they passed to the Happy Hunting  
Ground ;

Deer and ducks and yellow dog dingoes  
Croaked, but we did not care.

But you—ah, you were our pride, our treasure,  
Care-free child of a kingly race.

Undemonstrative ? Yes, in a measure,  
But every movement replete with grace.  
Whiles we mocked at the monkeys' tricks  
Or pored apart on the apteryx ;  
These could yield but a passing pleasure ;  
Yours was the primal place.

How our little ones' hearts would flutter  
When your intelligent eye peeped out,  
Saying as plainly as words could utter,  
“ Hurry up with that Brussels-sprout ! ”  
How we chortled with simple joy  
When you bit that impudent errand-boy ;  
“ That 'll teach him,” we heard you mutter,  
“ Whether I 've got the gout.”

P.P.

I

130 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Fairest, rarest in all the Zoo, you  
Bound us tight in affection's bond ;  
Now you 're gone from the friends that knew you,  
Wails the whaup in the Waders' Pond ;  
Wails the whaup and the seamews keen a  
Song of sorrow ; but you, Georgina,  
Frisk for ever where warm winds woo you,  
There, in the Great Beyond.

C. H. BRETHERTON.

Feb. 19, 1919.

“*Dulce Domum*”





## By the Roman Road

The wind it sang in the pine-tops, it sang like a  
humming harp ;

The smell of the sun on the bracken was wonderful  
sweet and sharp,

As sharp as the piney needles, as sweet as the gods  
were good,

For the wind it sung of the old gods, as I came  
through the wood !

It sung how long ago the Romans made a road,  
And the gods came up from Italy and found them  
an abode.

It sang of the wayside altars (the pine-tops sighed  
like the surf),

Of little shrines uplifted, of stone and scented turf,  
Of youths divine and immortal, of maids as white  
as the snow

134 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

That glimmered among the thickets a mort of  
years ago !

All in the cool of dawn, all in the twilight grey,  
The gods came up from Italy along the Roman  
way !

The altar smoke it has drifted and faded afar on  
the hill ;

No wood-nymphs haunt the hollows ; the reedy  
pipes are still ;

No more the youth Apollo shall walk in his sun-  
shine clear ;

No more the maid Diana shall follow the fallow-  
deer

(The woodmen grew so wise, the woodmen grew  
so old,

The gods went back to Italy—or so the story's  
told !)

But the woods are full of voices and of shy and  
secret things—

The badger down by the brook-side, the flick of  
a woodcock's wings,

BY THE ROMAN ROAD 135

The plump of a falling fir-cone, the pop of the  
sun-ripe pods,  
And the wind that sings in the pine-tops the song  
of the ancient gods—  
The song of the wind that says the Romans made  
a road,  
And the gods came up from Italy and found them  
an abode !

P. R. CHALMERS.

July 31, 1912.

Little Cow Hay

Stephen Culpepper  
Of Little Cow Hay  
Farmed four hundred acres—  
As Audit-book say ;  
An' he rode on a flea-bitten  
Fiddle-faced grey ;  
There 's the house—in the hollow,  
With gable an' eave,  
But they 've altered it so  
That you wouldn't believe ;—

Wouldn't know the old place  
If he saw it—old Steve ;

His dads an' his gran'dads  
Had lived there before ;—  
Born, married an' died there—  
At least half a score ;  
Big men the Culpeppers—  
As high as the door !

His wife was a Makepeace—  
An' none likelier,  
For she 'd five hundred pounds  
When he married o' her ;  
An' a grey eye as kindly  
As grey lavender ;

He 'd sweetest o' roses,  
He 'd soundest o' wheat ;  
Six sons—an' a daughter  
To make 'em complete,  
An' he always said Grace  
When they sat down to meat !

## LITTLE COW HAY

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He 'd the Blessin' o' Heaven  
On barnyard an' byre,  
For he made the best prices  
Of all in the shire ;  
An' he always shook hands  
With the Parson an' Squire !

An' whether his markets  
Had downs or had ups,  
He walked 'em three couple  
O' blue-mottle pups—  
As clumsy as ducklings—  
As crazy as tups !

But that must be nigh  
Sixty seasons away,  
When things was all diff'rent  
D 'ye see—an' to-day  
There ain't no Culpeppers  
At Little Cow Hay !

P. R. CHALMERS.

Oct. 8, 1913.

## On Simon's Stack

Hill shepherds, hard north-country men,  
 Bring down the baa'ing blackface droves  
 To market or to shearing-pen  
 From the high places and the groves—  
 High places of the fox and gled,  
 Groves of the stone-pine on the scree,  
 Lone sanctuaries where we have said,  
 "The gods have been ; the gods may be !"

'Mid conifer and fern and whin  
 I sat ; the turf was warm and dry ;  
 A sailing speck, the peregrine  
 Wheeled in the waste of azure sky ;  
 The blue-grey clouds of pinewoods clung,  
 Their vanguard climbed the heathery steep ;  
 A terrier with lolling tongue  
 Blinked in my shadow, half asleep.

The Legion's Way shone far beneath ;  
 A javelin white as Adria's foam,

It gleamed across dark leagues of heath  
To Rome, to everlasting Rome ;  
Likewise from Rome to Simon's Stack  
(That's logical, at least), and so  
It may have brought a Huntress back  
On trails She followed long ago !

I watched my drifting smoke-wreaths rise,  
And pictured Pagans plumed and tense  
Who climbed the hill to sacrifice  
To great Diana's excellence ;  
And—" Just the sort of church for me,"  
I said, and heard a fir-cone fall ;  
The puppy bristled at my knee—  
And that was absolutely all.

A queer thing is a clump of fir ;  
But, if it's old and on a hill,  
Free to that ancient trafficker,  
The wind, it's ten times queerer still ;  
Sometimes it's filled with bag-pipe skirls,  
Anon with heathen whispering ;  
Just then it seemed alive with girls  
Who laughed, and let a bowstring sing !



Yes, funny things your firwoods do :  
 They fill with elemental sounds ;  
 Hence, one has fancied feet that flew  
 And the high whimpering of hounds ;  
 ' A wind from down the corrie's cup—  
 Only the wind," said I to Tramp ;  
 He heard—stern down and hackles up,  
 I—with a forehead strangely damp.

\* \* \* \*

Wind ? or the Woodland Chastity  
 Passing, as once, upon Her way,  
 That left a little dog and me  
 Confounded in the light of day ?  
 A rabbit hopped across the track ;  
 The pup pursued with shrill ki-yi ;  
 I asked him which, when he came back ;  
 He couldn't tell—no more can I.

P. R. CHALMERS.

Sept. 24, 1913.

## For Dartymoor

Now I be man ov Dartymoor,  
Grim Dartymoor, grey Dartymoor ;  
I come vrom wur there bain't no war,  
    An' Tavy be a-voaming ;  
I'd pigs an' sheep *an'* lass—Aw my !  
    The beyootifullest maid 'er be !  
An' one vine day 'er comes to I,  
    An' zays—" My Jan," 'er zays,—“ lukee !  
        To France yu must be roaming !  
Vur Devon needs her sons again ;  
Her du be rousing moor an' fen ;  
An' yu must fight wi' Devon men  
    Vur Dartymoor, your Dartymoor ! ”

I zays, zays I, “ Leave Dartymoor ?  
Grim Dartymoor, grey Dartymoor ?  
Dear life,” I zays, “ *whatever vor*,  
    While Tavy be a-voaming ?  
While pigs be pigs, an' 'earts be true ;  
    An' market prices purty vair ;

Why should 'un go an' *parley-voo* ? ”

'Er zays, “ 'Cuz yu be waanted there !

Thet 's why yu must be roaming !

Vur Devon needs her sons again ;

Her du be rousing moor an' fen ;

An' yu must fight wi' Devon men

Vur Dartymoor ; my Dartymoor !

“ Ef yu woan't fight vur Dartymoor,

Grim Dartymoor, grey Dartymoor,

Things shall be as they wur avore

Us courted in the gloaming ! ”

'Er zays an' left me arl alone,

A-thinking over what 'er zaid,

Till arl was plain as Dewar Stone—

I zays to Dad, “ Mind pigs is fed,

While I be gone a-roaming !

Vur Devon needs her sons again ;

Her du be rousing moor an' fen ;

An' I must fight wi' Devon men

Vur Dartymoor, our Dartymoor ! ”

DUDLEY CLARK.

May 5, 1915.

## The Golden Valley

[Herefordshire.]

Abbeydore, Abbeydore,  
Land of apples and of gold,  
Where the lavish field-gods pour  
Song and cider manifold ;  
Gilded land of wheat and rye,  
Land where laden branches cry,  
“ Apples for the young and old  
Ripe at Abbeydore ! ”

Abbeydore, Abbeydore,  
Where the shallow river spins  
Elfin spells for evermore,  
Where the mellow kilderkins  
Hoard the winking apple-juice  
For the laughing reapers' use ;  
All the joy of life begins  
There at Abbeydore.

Abbeydore, Abbeydore,  
In whose lap of wonder teems

Largess from a wizard store,  
World of idle, crooning streams—  
From a stricken land of pain  
May I win to you again,  
Garden of the God of Dreams,  
Golden Abbeydore.

PERCY HAZELDEN.

Feb. 9, 1916.

### Devon Men

From Bideford to Appledore the meadows lie aglow  
With kingcup and buttercup that flout the summer  
snow ;  
And crooked-back and silver-head shall mow the  
grass to-day,  
And lasses turn and toss it till it ripen into hay ;  
For gone are all the careless youth did reap the  
land of yore,  
The lithe men and long men,  
The brown men and strong men,  
The men that hie from Bideford and ruddy Apple-  
dore.

From Bideford and Appledore they swept the sea  
of old

With cross-bow and falconet to tap the Spaniard's  
gold ;

They sped away with dauntless DRAKE to traffic  
on the Main,

To trick the drowsy galleon and loot the treasure  
train ;

For fearless were the gallant hands that pulled  
the sweeping oar,

The strong men, the free men,

The bold men, the seamen,

The men that sailed from Bideford and ruddy  
Appledore.

From Bideford and Appledore in craft of subtle  
grey

Are strong hearts and steady hearts to keep the  
sea to-day ;

So well may fare the garden where the cider-apples  
bloom

And Summer weaves her colour-threads upon a  
golden loom ;

P.P.

K

146      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

For ready are the tawny hands that guard the  
Devon shore,  
    The cool men, the bluff men,  
    The keen men, the tough men,  
The men that hie from Bideford and ruddy  
Appledore !

PERCY HAZELDEN.

July 7, 1915.

Southampton

The sky is grey and the clouds are weeping ;  
Winter wails in the wind again ;  
Night with her eyes bedimmed comes creeping ;  
    The sea is hidden in dusk and rain.

This is the gate of the path that leads us  
    Whither our duty the goal has set ;  
This is the way Old England speeds us—  
    Darkness, dreariness, wind and wet !

This is the gate where battle sends us,  
    Gaunt and broken, in pain and pride ;  
This is the welcome Home extends us—  
    Weeping rain on the cold grey tide.

Would we have balmy sunshine glowing  
Over the blue from the blue above ?  
Rather the rain and the night wind blowing,  
Rather the way of the land we love !

W. K. HOLMES.

Dec. 22, 1915.

### Cottage Garden Prayer

Little garden gods,  
You of good bestowing,  
You of kindly showing  
Mid the potting and the pods,  
Watchers of geranium beds,  
Pinks and stocks and suchlike orders,  
Rose, and sleepy poppy-heads,—  
Bless us in our borders,  
Little garden gods !

Little garden gods,  
Bless the time of sowing,  
Watering and growing ;  
Lastly, when our sunflower nods,



148 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And our rambler's red array  
Waits the honey-bee her labours,  
Bless our garden that it may  
Beat our next-door neighbour's,  
Little garden gods !

P. R. CHALMERS.  
9

May 8, 1912.

### The Devil in Devon

The Devil walked about the land  
And softly laughed behind his hand  
To see how well men worked his will  
And helped his darling projects still,  
The while contentedly they said :  
" There is no Devil ; he is dead."

But when by chance one day in Spring  
Through Devon he went wandering  
And for an idle moment stood  
Upon the edge of Dacombe wood,

Where bluebells almost hid the green,  
With the last primroses between,  
He bit his lip and turned away  
And could do no more work that day.

MISS ROSE FYLEMAN.

May 26, 1920.

*Dulce Domum*

The air is full of rain and sleet,  
A dingy fog obscures the street ;  
I watch the pane and wonder will  
The sun be shining on Boar's Hill,  
Rekindling on his western course  
The dying splendour of the gorse  
And kissing hands in joyous mood  
To primroses in Bagley Wood.  
I wish that when old Phœbus drops  
Behind yon hedgehog-haunted copse  
And high and bright the Northern Crown  
Is standing over White Horse Down  
I could be sitting by the fire  
In that my Land of Heart's Desire—

A fire of fir-cones and a log  
And at my feet a fubsy dog  
In Robinwood ! In Robinwood !  
I think the angels, if they could,  
Would trade their harps for railway tickets  
Or hang their crowns upon the thickets  
And walk the highways of the world  
Through eves of gold and dawns empearled,  
Could they be sure the road led on  
Twixt Oxford spires and Abingdon  
To where above twin valleys stands  
Boar's Hill, the best of promised lands ;  
That at the journey's end there stood  
A heaven on earth like Robinwood.

Heigho ! The sleet still whips the pane  
And I must turn to work again  
Where the brown stout of Erin hums  
Through Dublin's aromatic slums  
And Sinn Fein youths with shifty faces  
Hold " Parliaments " in public places  
And, heaping curse on mountainous curse  
In unintelligible Erse,

Harass with threats of war and arson  
Base Briton and still baser CARSON.  
But some day when the powers that be  
Demobilise the likes of me  
(Some seven years hence, as I infer,  
My actual exit will occur)  
Swift o'er the Irish Sea I'll fly,  
Yea, though each wave be mountains high,  
Nor pause till I descend to grab  
Oxford's surviving taxicab.  
Then "Home!" (Ah, HOME! my heart be still!)  
I'll say, and, when we reach Boar's Hill,  
I'll fill my lungs with heaven's own air  
And pay the cabman twice his fare,  
Then, looking far and looking nigh,  
Bare-headed and with hand on high,  
"Hear ye," I'll cry, "the vow I make,  
Familiar sprites of byre and brake,  
*J'y suis, j'y reste.* Let Bolshevicks  
Sweep from the Volga to the Styx;  
Let internecine carnage vex  
The gathering hosts of Poles and Czechs,

152      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And Jugo-Slavs and Tyrolese  
Impair the swart Italian's ease—  
Me for Boar's Hill ! These war-worn ears  
Are deaf to cries for volunteers ;  
No Samuel Browne or British warm  
Shall drape this svelte Apolline form  
Till over Cumnor's outraged top  
The actual shells begin to drop ;  
Till below Youlberry's stately pines  
Echo the whiskered Bolshy's lines  
And General TROTSKY's baggage blocks  
The snug bar-parlour of ' The Fox.' ”

C. H. BRETHERTON.

Feb. 5, 1919.

## The Seats of the Mighty

I think there can be nothing much more fair  
Than owning some large mansion in the shires,  
And living almost permanently there,  
In constant touch with animals and squires ;

## THE SEATS OF THE MIGHTY 153

Yet there is joy in peering through the gates  
Or squinting from the summit of a wall  
At other people's beautiful estates,  
Wondering what they have to pay in rates  
And coveting it all.

Yes, it is sweet to circle with one's spouse  
Some antique Court, constructed by QUEEN  
ANNE,  
Complete with oaks and tennis-courts and cows,  
And many a nice respectful serving-man,  
With dogs and donkeys and perhaps a swan,  
And lovely ladies having *such* a time,  
And garden-parties always going on,  
And ruins where the guide-book says KING JOHN  
Did nearly every crime.

Yes, it is sweet ; but what I want to know  
Is why one has to prowls about outside ;  
Surely the Earl of Bodleton and Bow,  
Surely Sir Egbert and his lovely bride  
Should wait all eager in the entrance-way  
To ask us in and take us through the grounds,

154      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And give one food and worry one to stay,  
Instead of simply keeping one at bay  
    With six or seven hounds.

Surely they realise one wants to see  
    The mullioned windows in the South-West wing,  
The private trout-stream and the banyan-tree,  
    The lilac bedroom where they lodged the King ;  
Surely they know how Bolshevik we feel  
    Outside, where shrubberies obstruct the view,  
Particularly as they scarce conceal  
The Earl and household at a hearty meal  
    Under the old, old yew.

I do not grudge the owner of The Chase ;  
    I do not loathe the tenant of The Lea ;  
I only want to walk about his place  
    And just imagine it belongs to me ;  
That is the kind of democratic sport  
    For keeping crime and Bolshevism low ;  
I don't imagine that the fiercest sort  
Feel quite so anarchist at Hampton Court,  
    Where anyone may go.

## THE SEATS OF THE MIGHTY 155

But I dare say that many a man must take  
Long looks of wonderment at Number Nine,  
Laburnum Avenue, and vainly ache  
To go inside a dwelling so divine ;  
And if indeed some Marquis knocks one day  
And says, " I 'm tired of standing in the street ;  
I want to see your mansion, if I may,"  
I shall receive him in the nicest way  
And show him round my " seat."

A. P. HERBERT.

Oct. 15, 1919.





*“Nymphidia”*



## Blue Roses

Shepherd in delicate Dresden china,  
Loitering ever the while you twine a  
Garland of oddly azure roses,  
All for a shepherdess passing fair ;  
Poor little shepherdess waiting there  
All the time for your china posies,  
Posies pale for her jet-black hair !

Doesn't she wait (oh the anxious glances !)  
Flowers for one of your stately dances,  
A crown to finish a dainty toilette,  
(Haven't the harps just now begun,  
Minuets 'neath a china sun ?)—  
Doesn't she dread that the dust may soil it,  
When, oh *when* will the boy be done ?

Summer and winter and still you linger,  
Laggard lover with lazy finger,  
Never your little maid's wreath completing,  
Still half-strung are its petalled showers ;  
Must she wait all her dancing hours,  
Wait in spite of her shy entreating,  
Wait for ever her azure flowers ?

P. R. CHALMERS.

Aug. 30, 1911.

### A House in a Wood

So 'tis your will to have a cell,  
My Betsey, of your own and dwell  
Here where the sun for ever shines  
That glances off the holly spines—  
A clearing where the trunks are few,  
Here shall be built a house for you,  
The little walls of beechen stakes  
Wattled with twigs from hazel brakes,  
Tiled with white oak-chips that lie round  
The fallen giants on the ground ;

Under your little feet shall be  
A ground-work of wild strawberry  
With gadding stem, a pleasant wort  
Alike for carpet and dessert.  
Here, Betsey, in the lucid shade  
Come, let us twine a green stockade  
With slender saplings all about,  
And a small window to look out,  
So that you may be " Not at Home "  
If any mortal callers come.  
Then shall arrive to make you mirth  
The four wise peoples of the earth :  
The thrifty ants who run around  
To fill their store-rooms underground ;  
The rabbit-folk, a feeble race,  
From out their rocky sleeping-place ;  
The grasshoppers who have no king,  
Yet come in companies to sing ;  
The lizard slim who shyly stands  
Swaying upon his slender hands—  
I'll give them all your new address.  
For me, my little anchoress,

P.P.

L

I'll never stir the bracken by  
 Your house ; the brown wood butterfly,  
 Passing you like the sunshine's fleck  
 That gilds the nape of your warm neck,  
 Shall still report me how you do  
 And bring me all the news of you,  
 And tell me (where I sit alone)  
 How gay you are, and how you're grown  
 A fox-glove's span in the soft weather.

\* \* \* \*

No ? Then we'll wander home together.

MRS. HELEN PARRY EDEN.

July 24, 1912.

## A Song of Syrinx

Little lady, whom 'tis said  
 Pan tried very hard to please,  
 I expect before you fled  
 'Neath the wondering willow-trees,

Ran away from his caress  
In the Doric wilderness,  
That you'd led him on a lot,  
Said you would, and then would not,—  
No way that to treat a man,  
Little lady loved of Pan !

I expect you'd dropped your eyes  
    (Eyes that held your stream's own hue,  
Kingfishers and dragon-flies  
    Sparkling in their ripple blue),  
And you'd tossed your tresses up,  
Yellow as the cool king-cup,  
And you'd dimpled at his vows  
Underneath the willow boughs,  
Ere you mocked him, ere you ran,  
Little lady loved of Pan !

So they've turned you to a reed,  
    As the great Olympians could,  
You've to bow, so they've decreed,  
    When old Pan comes through the wood,



164      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

You've to curtsey and to gleam  
In the wind and in the stream  
(Which are forms, I've heard folks say,  
That the god adopts to-day),  
And we watch you bear your ban,  
Little lady loved of Pan !

For in pleasant spots you lie  
Where the lazy river is,  
Where the chasing whispers fly  
Through the beds of bulrushes,  
Where the big chub, golden dun,  
Turns his sides to catch the sun,  
Where one listens for the queer  
Voices in the splashing weir,  
Where I know that still you can  
Weave a spell to charm a man,  
Little lady loved of Pan !

P. R. CHALMERS.

Sept. 13, 1911.

## Honey Meadow

Here, Betsey, where the sainfoin blows  
Pink and the grass more thickly grows,  
Where small brown bees are winging  
To clamber up the stooping flowers,  
We'll share the sweet and sunny hours  
Made murmurous with their singing.

Dear, it requires no small address  
In such a billowy floweriness  
For you, so young, to sally ;  
Yet would you still out-stay the sun  
And linger when his light was done  
Along the haunted valley.

O small brown fingers, clutched to seize  
The biggest blooms, don't spill the bees ;  
Imagine what contempt he  
Would meet who ventured to arrive  
Home, of an evening, at the hive  
With both his pockets empty !

Moreover, if you steal their share,  
 The bees become too poor to spare  
 Their sweets nor part with any  
 Honey at tea-time ; so for you  
 What were for them a cell too few  
 Would be a sell too many !

Or, what were worse for you and me,  
 They might admire the industry  
 So thoughtlessly paraded,  
 And, tired of their brown queen, maintain  
 That no one needed Betsey-Jane  
 As urgently as they did.

So would you taste in some far clime  
 The plunder of eternal thyme  
 And you would quite forget us,  
 Our cottage and these English trees,  
 When you were Queen of Honey Bees  
 At Hybla or Hymettus.

MRS. HELEN PARRY EDEN.

Sept. 18, 1912.

## A Dream

And at night we'd find a town,  
Flat-roofed, by a star-strewn sea,  
Where the pirate crew came down  
To a long-forgotten quay,  
And we'd meet them in the gloaming,  
Tarry pigtails, back from roaming,  
With a pot of pirate ginger for the likes of her  
and me !

She was small and rather pale,  
Grey-eyed, grey as smoke that weaves,  
And we'd watch them stowing sail,  
Forty most attractive thieves ;  
Propped against the porphyry column,  
She was seven, sweet and solemn,  
And she'd hair blue-black as swallows when they  
flit beneath the eaves.

On the moonlit sands and bare,  
Clamorous, jewelled in the dusk,  
There would be an Eastern Fair,  
We could smell the mules and musk,

168      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

We could see the cressets flaring,  
And we'd run to buy a fairing  
Where a black man blew a fanfare on a carven  
ivory tusk ;  
And we'd stop before the stall  
Of a grave green-turbaned khan,  
Gem or flower—he kept them all—  
Persian cat or yataghan,  
And I'd pay a golden guinea  
And she'd fill her holland pinny  
With white kittens and red roses and blue stones  
from Turkestan !

\*               \*               \*               \*

London streets have flowers anew,  
London shops with gems are set ;  
When you've none to give them to,  
What is pearl or violet ?  
Vain things both and emptinesses,  
So they wait a dream-Princess's  
Coming, if she's sweet and solemn with grey  
eyes and hair of jet !

P. R. CHALMERS.

Jan. 24, 1912.

## A Vagrant

The humble bee  
No skep has he,  
No twisted, straw-thatched dome,  
A ferny crest  
Provides his nest,  
The mowing-grass his home.

The crook-beaked shrike  
His back may spike  
And pierce him with a thorn ;  
The humble bee  
A tramp is he  
And there is none to mourn.

O'er bank and brook,  
In wooded nook,  
He wanders at his whim,  
Lives as he can,  
Owes naught to man,  
And man owes naught to him.

No hive receives  
 The sweets he gives,  
 No flowers for him are sown,  
 Yet wild and gay  
 He hums his way,  
 A nomad on his own.

MISS JESSIE POPE.

May 20, 1914.

### “Treasure Island”

A lover breeze to the roses pleaded,  
 Failed and faltered, took heart and advanced ;  
 Up over the peaches, unimpeded,  
 A great Red Admiral ducked and danced ;  
 But the boy with the book saw not, nor heeded,  
 Reading entranced—entranced !

He read, nor knew that the fat bees bumbled ;  
 He woke no whit to the tea-bell's touch,  
 The brown pigeons that wheeled and tumbled,  
 (For how should a pirate reck of such ?).  
 He read, and the flaming flower-beds crumbled,  
 At tap of the sea-cook's crutch !

And lo, there leapt for him dolphins running  
 The peacock seas of the buccaneer,  
 Lone, savage reefs where the seals lay sunning,  
 The curve of canvas, the creak of gear ;  
 For ever the Master's wondrous cunning  
 Lent him of wizard lear !

\* \* \* \*

But lost are the garden days of leisure,  
 Lost with their wide-eyed ten-year-old,  
 Yet if you 'd move to a bygone measure,  
 Or shape your heart to an ancient mould,  
 Maroons and schooners and buried treasure  
 Wrought on a page of gold,—

Then take the book in the dingy binding,  
 Still the magic comes, bearded, great,  
 And swaggering files of sea-thieves winding  
 Back, with their ruffling cut-throat gait,  
 Reclaim an hour when we first went finding  
 Pieces of Eight—of Eight.

P. R. CHALMERS.

July 5, 1911.



## Bazar

Dive in from the sunlight, smiting like a falchion,  
Underneath the awnings to the sudden shade,  
Saunter through the packed lane, many-voiced,  
colourful,  
Rippling with the currents of the South and  
Eastern trade.

Here are Persian carpets, ivory and peach-bloom,  
Tints to fill the heart of any child of man,  
Here are copper rose-bowls, leopard-skins,  
emeralds,  
Scarlet slippers curly-toed and beads from  
Kordofan.

Water-sellers pass with brazen saucers tinkling ;  
Hajjis in the doorways tell their amber beads ;  
Buy a lump of turquoise, a scimitar, a neckerchief  
Worked with rose and saffron for a lovely lady's  
needs.

Here we pass the goldsmiths, copper, brass and  
silver-smiths,

All a-clang and jingle, all a-glint and gleam ;  
Here the silken webs hang, shimmering, delicate,  
Soft-hued as an afterglow and melting as a  
dream.

Buy a little blue god brandishing a sceptre,  
Buy a dove with coral feet and pearly breast,  
Buy some ostrich feathers, silver shawls, perfume  
jars,  
Buy a stick of incense for the shrine that you  
love best.

MISS MACKELLAR.

July 23, 1913.

## A Fairy went A-Marketing

A fairy went a-marketing—  
She bought a little fish ;  
She put it in a crystal bowl  
Upon a golden dish ;

All day she sat in wonderment  
And watched its silver gleam,  
And then she gently took it up  
And slipped it in a stream.

A fairy went a-marketing—  
She bought a coloured bird ;  
It sang the sweetest, shrillest song  
That ever she had heard ;  
She sat beside its painted cage  
And listened half the day,  
And then she opened wide the door  
And let it fly away.

A fairy went a-marketing—  
She bought a winter gown  
All stitched about with gossamer  
And lined with thistledown ;  
She wore it all the afternoon  
With prancing and delight,  
Then gave it to a little frog  
To keep him warm at night.

## A FAIRY WENT A-MARKETING 175

A fairy went a-marketing—  
She bought a gentle mouse  
To take her tiny messages,  
To keep her tiny house ;  
All day she kept its busy feet  
Pit-patting to and fro,  
And then she kissed its silken ears,  
Thanked it, and let it go.

MISS ROSE FYLEMAN.

Jan. 2, 1918.

## Fairies in the Malverns

As I walked over Hollybush Hill  
The sun was low and the winds were still,  
And never a whispering branch I heard  
Nor ever the tiniest call of a bird.

And when I came to the topmost height  
Oh, but I saw such a wonderful sight,  
All about on the hill-crest there  
The fairies danced in the golden air.

Danced and frolicked with never a sound  
 In and out in a magical round ;  
 Wide and wider the circle grew  
 Then suddenly melted into the blue.

\* \* \* \*

As I walked down into Eastnor Vale  
 The stars already were twinkling pale,  
 And over the spaces of dew-white grass  
 I saw a marvellous pageant pass.

Tiny riders on tiny steeds  
 Decked with blossoms and armed with reeds,  
 With gossamer banners floating far  
 And a radiant queen in an ivory car.

The beeches spread their petticoats wide  
 And curtseyed low upon either-side ;  
 The rabbits scurried across the glade  
 To peep at the glittering cavalcade.

Far and farther I saw them go  
 And vanish into the woods below ;

## FAIRIES IN THE MALVERNS 177

Then over the shadowy woodland ways  
I wandered home in a sweet amaze.

\* \* \* \*

But Malvern people need fear no ill  
Since fairies bide in their country still.

MISS ROSE FYLEMAN.

Aug. 28, 1918.

### Fairy Music

When the fiddlers play their tunes you may  
sometimes hear,  
Very softly chiming in, magically clear,  
Magically high and sweet, the tiny crystal notes  
Of fairy voices bubbling free from tiny fairy  
throats.

When the birds at break of day chant their  
morning prayers  
Or on sunny afternoons pipe ecstatic airs,  
Comes an added rush of sound to the silver din—  
Songs of fairy troubadours gaily joining in.

P.P.

M

When athwart the drowsy fields summer twilight  
 falls,  
 Through the tranquil air there float elfin madrigals;  
 And in wild November nights, on the winds  
 astride,  
 Fairy hosts go rushing by, singing as they ride.

Every dream that mortals dream, sleeping or  
 awake,  
 Every lovely fragile hope—these the fairies take,  
 Delicately fashion them and give them back again  
 In tender limpid melodies that charm the hearts  
 of men.

MISS ROSE FYLEMAN.

Sept. 18, 1918.

### Sometimes

Some days are fairy days. The minute that you  
 wake  
 You have a magic feeling that you never could  
 mistake ;

You may not see the fairies, but you know they're  
all about,  
And any single minute they might all come  
popping out ;  
You want to laugh, you want to sing, you want to  
dance and run,  
Everything is different, everything is fun ;  
The sky is full of fairy clouds, the streets are  
fairy ways—  
*Anything* might happen on truly fairy days.

Some nights are fairy nights. Before you go to bed  
You hear their darling music go chiming in your  
head ;  
You look into the garden and through the misty  
grey  
You see the trees all waiting in a breathless kind  
of way.  
All the stars are smiling ; they know that very  
soon  
The fairies will come singing from the land behind  
the moon.



180 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

If only you could keep awake when Nurse puts  
out the light . . .

*Anything* might happen on a truly fairy night.

MISS ROSE FYLEMAN.

June 16, 1920.

## The Wild Swan

[Lament on a very rare bird who recently appeared in  
England, and was immediately shot.]

Over the sea (ye maids) a wild swan came ;

(O maidens) it was but the other day ;

Men saw him as he passed with earnest aim

To some sequestered spot down Norfolk way—

A thing whose like had not been seen for years :

*Lament, ye damsels, nor refuse your tears.*

Serene, he winged his alabaster flight

Neath the full beams of the mistaken sun

O'er gazing crowds, till at th' unwonted sight

Some unexpected sportsman with a gun

Brought down the bird, all fluff, mid sounding  
cheers :

*Mourn, maidens, mourn, and wipe the thoughtful tears.*

Well you may weep. No common bird was he.  
Has it not long been known, the whole world  
wide,  
A wild swan is a prince of faerie,  
Who comes in such disguise to choose his bride  
From those of humble lot and tame careers,  
*Of whom I now require some punctual tears.*

Wherefore, I say, let every scullion-wench  
Grieve, nor the dairy-maid from sobs refrain ;  
The sad postmistress, too, should feel the  
wrench,  
And the lone tweeny of her loss complain ;  
Let one—let all afflict the listening spheres :  
*Deplore, ye maids, his fate with rueful tears.*

It was for these he sought this teeming land,  
High on the silvery wings of old romance ;  
One knows not where he had bestowed his hand,  
But e'en the least had stood an equal chance  
Of such fair triumph o'er her bitter peers  
*And the sweet pleasure of their anguished tears.*

O prince of faerie ! O stately swan !  
 And ye, whose hopes are with the might-have-beens,  
 Curst be the wretch through whom those hopes  
 have gone,  
 Who blew your magic swain to smithereens ;  
 Let your full sorrows whelm his stricken ears ;  
*Lament, ye damsels, nor refuse your tears.*

CAPT. KENDALL.

March 18, 1914.

### The Strange Servant

Tall she is, and straight and slender,  
 With soft hair beneath a cap  
 Pent and pinned ; within her lap  
 Weep her lily hands, for work too tender.

She's a fairy, through transgression  
 Doomed to doff her webby smock,  
 Doomed to rise at six o'clock,  
 Doomed to bear a mistress's repression.

## THE STRANGE SERVANT 183

Once she romped in fairy revels  
Down the dim moon-dappled glades,  
Rode on thrilling honey-raids,  
Danced the glow-lamps out on lawny levels.

Ere her trouble she was tiny :  
'Tis her doom to be so tall ;  
Thus her hair no more will fall  
To her feet, all shimmering and sunshiny.

O her eyes—like pools at twilight,  
Mournful, whence pale radiance peers !  
O her voice, that throbs with tears  
In the attic 'neath the staring skylight !

Daylong does she household labour,  
Lights the fires and scrubs the floors,  
Washes up and answers doors,  
Ushers in the dread suburban neighbour.

Then at night she seeks her attic,  
Parts her clothes with those pale hands,  
Slips at last her shift, and stands  
Moon-caressed, most yearningly ecstatic,

Arms out pleads her condonation—  
 Hapless one ! she gains no grace ;  
 They whom fairy laws abase  
 Serve the utter term of tribulation.

Yet (though far her happy wood is)  
 Oft her folk fly in at night,  
 Pour sweet pity on her plight,  
 Comfort her with gossipry and goodies.

W. W. BLAIR FISH.

Oct. 1, 1916.

### To an Egyptian Boy

Child of the gorgeous East, whose ardent suns  
 Have kissed thy velvet skin to deeper lustre  
 And given thine almond eyes  
 A look more calm and wise  
 Than any we pale Westerners can muster,  
 Alas ! my mean intelligence affords  
 No clue to grasp the meaning of the words  
 Which vehemently from thy larynx leap.

TO AN EGYPTIAN BOY 185

How is it that the liquid language runs ?

“ *Nai—soring—trif—erwonbi—aster—ferish—  
ip.*”

E'en so, methinks, did CLEOPATRA woo

Her vanquished victor, couched on scented roses

And PHARAOH from his throne

With more imperious tone

Addressed in some such terms rebellious

Moses ;

And esoteric priests in Theban shrines,

Their ritual conned from hieroglyphic signs,

Thus muttered incantations dark and deep

To Isis and Osiris, Thoth and Shu :

“ *Nai—soring—trif—erwonbi—aster—ferish—  
ip.*”

In all my youthful studies why was this

Left out? What tutor shall I blame my folly on?

From Sekhet-Hetepu

Return to mortal view,

O shade of BRUGSCH or MARIETTE or CHAM-

POLLION ;

Expound the message latent in his speech  
Or send a clearer medium, I beseech ;

For lo ! I listen till I almost weep  
For anguish at the priceless gems I miss :

*" Nai—soring—trif—erwonbi—aster—ferish—  
ip."*

To sundry greenish orbs arranged on trays—  
Unripe, unluscious fruit—he draws attention.

My mind, till now so dark,

Receives a sudden spark

That glows and flames to perfect comprehen-  
sion ;

And I, whom no Rosetta Stone assists,

Become the peer of Egyptologists,

From whom exotic tongues no secrets keep ;

For this is what the alien blighter says :

*" Nice orang' ; three for one piastre ; very  
cheap."*

H. W. BERRY.

Jan. 8, 1919.

*In Memoriam*





### In Memoriam

## Algernon Charles Swinburne

BORN 1837. DIED APRIL 10, 1909.

What of the night ? For now his day is done,  
And he, the herald of the red sunrise,  
Leaves us in shadow even as when the sun  
Sinks from the sombre skies.

High peer of SHELLEY, with the chosen few  
He shared the secrets of Apollo's lyre,  
Nor less from Dionysian altars drew  
The god's authentic fire.

Last of our land's great singers, dowered at birth  
With music's passion, swift and sweet and  
strong,  
Who taught in heavenly numbers, new to earth,  
The wizardry of song—

190      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

His spirit, fashioned after Freedom's mould,  
Impatient of the bonds that mortals bear,  
Achieves a franchise large and uncontrolled,  
Rapt through the void of air.

"What of the night?" For him no night  
can be ;

The night is ours, left songless and forlorn ;  
Yet o'er the darkness, where he wanders free,  
Behold, a star is born !

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

APRIL 21, 1909.

In Memoriam

George Meredith, O.M.

BORN 1828. DIED MAY 18, 1909

Masked in the beauty of the May-dawn's birth,  
Death came and kissed the brow still nobly fair,  
And hushed that heart of youth for which the  
earth  
Still kept its morning air.

Long time initiate in her lovely lore,  
Now is he one with Nature's woods and streams  
Whereof, a Paradisal robe, he wore  
The visionary gleams.

Among her solitudes he moved apart ;  
The mystery of her clouds and star-sown skies,  
Touched by the fusing magic of his art,  
Shone clear for other eyes.

When from his lips immortal music broke,  
It was the myriad voice of vale and hill ;  
" The lark ascending " poured a song that woke  
An echo sweeter still.

Yet most we mourn his loss as one who gave  
The gift of laughter and the boon of tears,  
Interpreter of life, its gay and grave,  
Its human hopes and fears.

Seer of the soul of things, inspired to know  
Man's heart and woman's, over all he threw  
The spell of fancy's iridescent glow,  
The sheen of sunlit dew.

192      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And of the fellowship of that great Age  
    For whose return our eyes have waited long,  
None left so rich a twofold heritage  
    Of high romance and song.

We knew him, fronted like the Olympian gods,  
    Large in his loyalty to land and friend,  
Fearless to fight alone with Fortune's odds,  
    Fearless to face the end.

And he is dead.    And at the parting sign  
    We speak, too late, the love he little guessed,  
And bid him in the nation's heart for shrine  
    Take his eternal rest.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

MAY 26, 1909.

In Memoriam

William Booth

FOUNDER AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE  
SALVATION ARMY.

BORN 1829. DIED AUGUST 20, 1912.

As theirs, the warrior knights of Christian fame,  
Who for the Faith led on the battle line,  
Who stormed the breach and swept through blood  
and flame  
Under the Cross for sign,

Such was his life's crusade ; and, as their death  
Inspired in men a purpose pure of taint—  
In some great cause to give their latest breath—  
So died this soldier-saint.

Nay, his the nobler warfare, since his hands  
Set free the thralls of misery and her brood—  
Hunger and haunting shame and sin that brands—  
And gave them hope renewed.

P.P.

N

194      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Bruised souls, and bodies broken by despair,  
    He healed their heartache and their wounds he  
    dressed,  
And drew them, so redeemed, his task to share,  
    Sworn to the same high quest.

Armed with the Spirit's wisdom for his sword,  
    His feet with tidings of salvation shod,  
He knew no foes save only such as warred  
    Against the peace of God.

Scorned or acclaimed, he kept his harness bright,  
    Still, through the darkest hour, untaught to yield  
And at the last, his face toward the light,  
    Fell on the victor's field.

No laurelled blazon rests above his bier,  
    Yet a great people bows its stricken head  
Where he who fought without reproach or fear,  
    Soldier of Christ, lies dead.

SIR OWEN SEAMAN.

Aug. 28, 1912.

# *The War*

195





## Wireless

There sits a little demon  
Above the Admiralty,  
To take the news of seamen  
Seafaring on the sea ;  
So all the folk aboard-ships  
Five hundred miles away  
Can pitch it to their Lordships  
At any time of day.

The cruisers prowl observant ;  
Their crackling whispers go ;  
The demon says, " Your servant,"  
And lets their Lordships know ;  
A fog 's come down off Flanders ?  
A something showed off Wick ?  
The captains and commanders  
Can speak their Lordships quick.

The demon sits a-waking ;  
 Look up above Whitehall—  
 E'en now, mayhap, he's taking  
 The Greatest Word of all ;  
 From smiling folk aboard-ships  
 He ticks it off the reel :—  
 " An' may it please your Lordships :  
 A Fleet's put out o' Kiel ! "

P. R. CHALMERS.

Nov. 11, 1914.

## Guns of Verdun

Guns of Verdun point to Metz  
 From the plated parapets ;  
 Guns of Metz grin back again  
 O'er the fields of fair Lorraine.

Guns of Metz are long and grey  
 Growling through a summer day ;  
 Guns of Verdun, grey and long,  
 Boom an echo of their song.

Guns of Metz to Verdun roar,  
" Sisters, you shall foot the score " ;  
Guns of Verdun say to Metz,  
" Fear not, for we pay our debts."

Guns of Metz they grumble, " When ? "  
Guns of Verdun answer then,  
" Sisters, when to guard Lorraine  
Gunnners lay you East again ! "

P. R. CHALMERS.

Sept. 2, 1914.

## The Woods of France

MIDSUMMER 1915.

Not this year will the hamadryads sing  
The old-time songs of Arcady that ran  
Down the Lycæan glades ; the joyous ring  
Of satyr dancers call away their clan ;  
Not this year follow on the ripened Spring  
The Summer pipes of Pan.

Cometh a time—as times have come before—  
When the loud legions rushing in array,  
The flying bullet and the cannon roar,  
Scatter the Forest Folk in pale dismay  
To hie them far from their green dancing floor,  
And wait a happier day.

Yet think not that your Forest Folk are dead ;  
To this old haunt, when friend has vanquished  
foe,  
They will return anon with lightsome tread  
And labour that this place they love and know,  
All broken now and bruised, may raise its head  
And still in beauty grow.

Wherefore they wait the coming of good time  
In the green English woods down Henley way,  
In meadows where the tall cathedrals chime,  
Or watching from the white St. Margaret's Bay,  
Or North among the heather hills that climb  
Above the Tweed and Tay.

And you, our fighters in the woods of France,  
Take heart and smite their enemy, the Hun,

Who knows not Arcady, by whom the dance  
Of fauns is scattered, at whose deeds the sun  
Hides in despair ; strike boldly and perchance  
The work will soon be done.

To you, so fighting, messengers will bring  
The comfort of quiet places ; in the din  
Of battle you shall hear the murmuring  
Of the home winds and waters ; there will win  
Through to your hearts the word, " Still Pan is  
king ;  
His Midsummer is in."

C. HILTON BROWN.

June 23, 1915.

## Summer and Sorrow

Brier rose and woodbine flaunting by the wayside,  
Field afoam with ox-eyes, crowfoot's flaming  
gold,  
Poppies in the corn-rig, broom on every braeside,  
Once again 'tis summer as in years of old—  
Only in my bosom lags the winter's cold.

202      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

All among the woodland hyacinths are gleaming ;  
    O the blue of heaven glinting through the trees !  
Lapped in noonday languor Nature lies a-dreaming,  
    Lulled to rest by droning clover-haunting bees.  
    (Deeper dreams my dear love, slain beyond the  
        seas.)

Lost against the sunlight happy larks are singing,  
    Lowly list their loved ones nestled in the plain ;  
Bright about my pathway butterflies are winging,  
    Fair and fleet as moments mourned for now in  
        vain—

    In my eyes the shadow, at my heart the pain.

A. B. GILLESPIE.

July 28, 1915.

## Defaulters

For an extra drink  
    Defaulters we,  
We cuts the lawn in front of the Mess ;  
    We're shoved in clink,  
    Ten days C.B.,  
And rolls the lawn in front of the Mess.

We picks up weeds  
 And 'umps the coal ;  
 We trims the lawn in front of the Mess ;  
 We 're plantin' seeds,  
 The roads we roll,  
 Likewise the lawn in front of the Mess.

The Officers they  
 Are sloshin' balls  
 On the lawn we 've marked in front of the Mess ;  
 And every day  
 Our names they call  
 To rake the lawn in front of the Mess.

And once a while  
 They 'as a " do "  
 On the lawn in front of the Officers' Mess.  
 Ain't 'arf some style,  
 Band playin' too,  
 On *our* bloomin' lawn in front of the Mess.

They dances about  
 And digs their 'eels  
 In our lawn in front of the Officers' Mess ;



There ain't no doubt  
As 'ow we feels  
For the lawn in front of the Officers' Mess.

The turf's gone west,  
And so you see  
There ain't much lawn in front of the Mess.  
We does our best,  
Gets more C.B.,  
And mends the lawn in front of the Mess.

The C.O., who  
Sez 'e can see  
We loves the lawn in front of the Mess  
'E knows this too—  
Without C.B.  
There'd be no lawn in front of the Mess.

C. T. PEZARE.

Aug. 11, 1915.

## A Canadian to His Parents

Mother and Dad, I understand

At last why you 've for ever been  
Telling me how that way-off land  
Of yours was Home ; for since I 've seen  
The place that up to now was just a name  
I feel the same.

The college green, the village hall,  
St. Paul's, The Abbey, how could I  
Spell out your meaning, I whose all  
Was peaks that pricked a sun-down sky  
And endless prairie lands that stretched below  
Their pathless snow ?

But now I 've trodden magic stairs  
Age-rounded in a Norman fane,  
Beat time to bells that trembled prayers  
Down spangly banks of country lane,  
Throbbled with the universal heart that beats  
In London streets.

I'd heard of world-old chains that bind  
So tight that she can scarcely stir,  
Till tired Old England drops behind  
Live nations more awake than her,  
Like us out West. I thought it all was true  
Before I knew.

But England's sure what she's about,  
And moves along in work and rest  
Too big and set for brag and shout,  
And so I never might have guessed  
All that she means unless I'd watched her ways  
These battle-days.

And now I've seen what makes me proud  
Our chaps have proved a soldier's right  
To England; glad that I'm allowed  
My bit with her in field and fight;  
And since I'm come to join them Over There  
I claim my share.

C. CONWAY PLUMBE.

Sept. 1, 1915.

"*Quat' Sous Lait*"

Marie Thérèse is passing fair,  
 Marie Thérèse has red gold hair,  
 Marie Thérèse is passing shy,  
 And Marie Thérèse is passing by ;  
 Soldiers lounging along the street  
 Smile as they rise to their aching feet,  
 And with aching hearts they make their way  
 After the maiden for *quat' sous lait*.

Beer in the mug is amber brown,  
 Beer in the mug is the stuff to drown  
 Dust and drought and a parching thirst ;  
 Beer in the mug comes an easy first,  
 Except when Marie Thérèse is near,  
 With the sun in her tresses so amber clear ;  
 Then quickly we leave our estaminets  
 For Marie Thérèse's *quat' sous lait*.

Yvonne Pol of *La Belle Française*  
 Cannot compare with Marie Thérèse ;

Berthe of the " Coq " looks old and staid  
 When one but thinks of our dairymaid ;  
 Beer in the mug is good to quench  
 Thirsts of men who can speak no French ;  
 Heaven is ours who can smile and say,  
 " Marie Thérèse, give me *quat' sous lait*."

DENIS GARSTIN.

Aug. 18, 1915.

### In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
 Between the crosses, row on row,  
     That mark our place ; and in the sky  
     The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
 Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
 We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
     Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
     In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe :  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch ; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

LT.-COL. JOHN MCCRAE.

Dec. 8, 1915.

*Dulce et Decorum*

O young and brave, it is not sweet to die,  
To fall and leave no record of the race,  
A little dust trod by the passers-by,  
Swift feet that press your lonely resting-place ;  
Your dreams unfinished, and your song unheard—  
Who wronged your youth by such a careless word ?

All life was sweet—veiled mystery in its smile ;  
High in your hands you held the brimming cup ;  
Love waited at your bidding for a while,  
Not yet the time to take its challenge up ;

P.P.

o

210 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Across the sunshine came no faintest breath  
To whisper of the tragedy of death.

And then, beneath the soft and shining blue,  
Faintly you heard the drum's insistent beat ;  
The echo of its urgent note you knew,  
The shaken earth that told of marching feet ;  
With quickened breath you heard your country's  
call,  
And from your hands you let the goblet fall.

You snatched the sword, and answered as you  
went,  
For fear your eager feet should be outrun,  
And with the flame of your bright youth unspent  
Went shouting up the pathway to the sun.  
O valiant dead, take comfort where you lie.  
So sweet to live ? Magnificent to die !

MRS. ROBERTSON GLASGOW.

Jan. 26, 1916.

## The Nurse

Here in the long white ward I stand,  
Pausing a little breathless space,  
Touching a restless fevered hand,  
Murmuring comfort's commonplace—

Long enough pause to feel the cold  
Fingers of fear about my heart ;  
Just for a moment, uncontrolled,  
All the pent tears of pity start.

While here I strive, as best I may,  
Strangers' long hours of pain to ease,  
Dumbly I question—*Far away*  
*Lies my beloved even as these ?*

MISS G. M. MITCHELL.

Aug. 30, 1916.



### Jimmy—Killed in Action

Horses he loved, and laughter, and the sun,  
A song, wide spaces and the open air ;  
The trust of all dumb living things he won,  
And never knew the luck too good to share.

His were the simple heart and open hand,  
And honest faults he never strove to hide ;  
Problems of life he could not understand,  
But as a man would wish to die he died.

Now, though he will not ride with us again,  
His merry spirit seems our comrade yet,  
Freed from the power of weariness or pain,  
Forbidding us to mourn—or to forget.

W. K. HOLMES.

Aug. 1, 1917.

## The Inn o' the Sword

A SONG OF YOUTH AND WAR.

Roving along the King's highway

I met wi' a Romany black.

"Good day," says I; says he, "Good day,

And what may you have in your pack?"

"Why, a shirt," says I, "and a song or two

To make the road go faster."

He laughed: "Ye'll find or the day be through

There's more nor that, young master.

Oh, roving's good and youth is sweet

And love is its own reward;

But there's that shall stay your careless feet

When ye come to the Sign o' the Sword."

"Riddle me, riddlemaree," quoth I,

"Is a game that's ill to win,

And the day is o'er fair such tasks to try"—

Said he, "Ye shall know at the inn."

With that he suited his path to mine

And we travelled merrily,

Till I was ware of the promised sign

And the door of an hostelry.

And the Romany sang, "To the very life

Ye shall pay for bed and board ;

Will ye turn aside to the House of Strife ?

Will ye lodge at the Inn o' the Sword ? "

Then I looked at the inn 'twixt joy and fear,

And the Romany looked at me.

Said I, " We ha' come to a parting here

And I know not who you be."

But he only laughed as I smote on the door :

" Gó, take ye the fighting chance ;

Mayhap I once was a troubadour

In the knightly days of France.

Oh, the feast is set for those who dare

And the reddest o' wine outpoured ;

And some sleep sound after peril and care

At the Hostelry of the Sword."

A. L. JENKINS.

Jan. 24, 1917.

## The Lighted Way

Little beam of purest ray  
Lying like a path of glory  
Through the chimney-pots that sway  
Over London's topmost storey,  
Lighting to the knightly fray  
Pussies black and brown and gray,  
Lovesick tenors young and gay,  
Whiskered bassos old and hoary,  
Shining from my attic room  
Thou dost lure them to their doom.

How could I without thine aid  
Greet their ill-timed serenade ?  
How discover in the dark  
If the hair-brush found its mark,  
Or distinguish hits from misses  
As the whistling soap-dish hisses,  
Lifting like a bursting bomb  
James, the next door neighbour's Tom ?

•

Now by nailing half a kipper  
 Neath thy radiance I can down  
 (Aiming carefully at the brown  
 With a bootjack or a slipper)  
 Half the amorous cats in Town.  
 Now as I remove my boots  
 I can count the stricken brutes,  
 Chalking as I pass to bed  
 On the wall above my head,  
 "Thirteen wounded, seven dead."

I have strafed the surly Fritz  
 In the neighbourhood of "Wipers,"  
 Bombed the artless Turk to bits,  
 Potted his elusive snipers,  
 Blown his comfortable lair  
 Like a nest of stinging vipers  
 Several hundred feet in air ;  
 But the sport was tame, I wis,  
 In comparison with this,  
 When the bottle built for stout  
 Lays the chief soprano out,

•

And the heavy letter-weight  
Drums on her astonished mate,  
Ginger Bill, the bass, who falls  
Uttering fearful caterwauls.

\* \* \* \*

(*Later.*) Baleful shaft of light,  
Blazing like a ruddy beacon,  
Guiding through the starless night  
Zeppelins that come to wreak on  
Sleeping Londoners the might  
Of Teutonic *schrecklichkeit*,  
Tears bedew the pillow white  
Which I lay my blenching cheek on,  
For the minion of the law,  
Who in peace-time droops and drowzes,  
From a point of vantage saw,  
Gleaming high above the houses,  
Thee, incriminating ray,  
And—there is a fine to pay.

C. H. BRETHERTON.

Nov. 8, 1916.

## Hymn for High Places

In darkened days of strife and fear,  
When far from home and hold,  
I do essay my soul to cheer  
As did wise men of old ;  
When folk do go in doleful guise  
And are for life afraid,  
I to the hills will lift mine eyes  
From whence doth come mine aid.

I shall my soul a temple make  
Where hills stand up on high ;  
Thither my sadness shall I take  
And comfort there descry ;  
For every good and noble mount  
This message doth extend—  
That evil men must render count  
And evil days must end.

For, sooth, it is a kingly sight  
To see God's mountain tall

## HYMN FOR HIGH PLACES 219

That vanquisheth each lesser height  
As great hearts vanquish small ;  
Stand up, stand up, ye holy hills,  
As saints and seraphs do,  
That ye may bear these present ills  
And lead men safely through.

Let high and low repair and go  
To where great hills endure ;  
Let strong and weak be there to seek  
Their comfort and their cure ;  
And for all hills in fair array  
Now thanks and blessings give,  
And, bearing healthful hearts away,  
Home go and stoutly live.

C. HILTON BROWN.

Aug. 22, 1917.



## To Smith in Mesopotamy

Master of Arts, how is it with you now ?

Our spires stand up against the saffron dawn  
And Isis breaks in silver at the prow

Of many a skiff, and by each dewy lawn  
Purple and gold the tall flag-lilies stand ;  
And SHELLEY sleeps above his empty tomb  
Hard by the staircase where you had your room,  
And all the scented lilacs are in bloom,  
But you are far from this our fairy-land.

Your heavy wheel disturbs the ancient dust  
Of empires dead ere Oxford saw the light.  
Those flies that form a halo round your crust  
And crawl into your sleeping-bag at night—  
Their grandsires drank the blood of NADIR SHAH,  
And tapped the sacred veins of SULEYMAN ;  
There flashed dread TIMOUR's whistling yata-  
ghan,  
And soothed the tiger ear of GENGHIZ KHAN  
The cream of Tartary's battle-drunk " Heiyah ! "

TO SMITH IN MESOPOTAMY 221

And yonder, 'mid the colour and the cries  
Of mosque and minaret and thronged bazaars  
And fringed palm-trees dark against the skies  
HARUN AL RASCHID walked beneath the stars  
And heard the million tongues of old Baghdad,  
Till out of Basrah, as the dawn took wing,  
Came up the laden camels, string on string ;  
But now there is not left them anything  
Of all the wealth and wisdom that they had.

Somehow I cannot see you, lean and browned,  
Chasing the swart Osmanli through the scrub  
Or hauling railroad ties and " steel mild round "  
Sunk in the sands of Irak to the hub,  
Heaping coarse oaths on Mesopotamy ;  
But rather strewn in gentlemanly ease  
In some cool *serdab* or beneath the trees  
That fringe the river-bank you hug your knees  
And watch the garish East go chattering by.

And at your side some wise old priest reclines  
And weaves a tale of dead and glorious days

When MAMUN reigned ; expounds the heavenly  
signs

Whose movements fix the span of mortal days ;  
Touches on Afreets and the ways of Djinns ;  
Through his embroidered tale real heroes pass,  
RUSTUM the bold and BAHRAM the wild ass,  
Who never dreamed of using poisoned gas  
Or spread barbed wire before the foeman's shins.

I think I hear you saying, " Not so much  
Of waving palm-trees and the flight of years ;  
It 's evident that you are out of touch  
With war as managed by the Engineers.  
Hot blasts of *sherki* are our daily treat,  
And toasted sandhills full of Johnny Turk  
And almost anything that looks like work,  
And thirst and flies and marches that would irk  
A cast-iron soldier with asbestos feet."

Know, then, the thought was fathered by the wish  
We oldsters feel, that you and everyone  
Who through the heat and flies conspire to dish  
The "*Drang nach Osten*" of the beastly Hun

TO SMITH IN MESOPOTAMY 223

Shall win their strenuous virtue's modest wage.  
And if at Nishapur and Babylon  
The cup runs dry, we'll fill it later on,  
And here where Cherwell soothes the fretful don  
In flowing sherbet pledge our easeful sage.

C. H. BRETHERTON.

June 6, 1917.

By the Canal in Flanders

By the canal in Flanders I watched a barge's prow  
Creep slowly past the poplar-trees ; and there I  
made a vow

That when these wars are over and I am home at  
last

However much I travel I shall not travel fast.

Horses and cars and yachts and planes : I've no  
more use for such :

For in three years of war's alarms I've hurried  
far too much ;

224      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And now I dream of something sure, silent and  
slow and large ;  
So when the War is over—why, I mean to buy a  
barge.

A gilded barge I'll surely have, the same as  
Egypt's Queen,  
And it will be the finest barge that ever you have  
seen ;  
With polished mast of stout pitch pine, tipped with  
a ball of gold,  
And two green trees in two white tubs placed just  
abast the hold.

So when past Pangbourne's verdant meads, by  
Cliveden's mossy stems,  
You see a barge all white-and-gold come gliding  
down the Thames,  
With tow-rope spun from coloured silks and snow-  
white horses three,  
Which stop beside your river house—you'll know  
the bargee's me.

BY THE CANAL IN FLANDERS 225

I'll moor my craft beside your lawn ; so up and  
make good cheer !

Pluck me your greenest salads ! Draw me your  
coolest beer !

For I intend to lunch with you and talk an hour  
or more

Of how we used to hustle in the good old days of  
war.

NORMAN DAVEY.

Sept. 5, 1917.

A Watch in the Night

" Watchmen, what of the night ? "

" Rumours clash from the towers ;

The clocks strike different hours ;

The vanes point different ways.

Through darkness leftward and right

Voices quaver and boom,

Pealing our victory's praise,

Tolling the tocsin of doom."

P.P.

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226 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

" Optimist, what of the night ? "

" Night is over and gone ;

See how the dawn marches on,

Triumphing, over the hills.

Armies of foemen in flight

Scatter dismay and despair,

Wild is the terror that fills

War-lords that crouch in their lair."

" Pessimist, what of the night ? "

" Blackness that walls us about ;

The last little star has gone out,

Whelmed in the wrath of the storm.

Exhaustless, resistless in might,

The enemy faints not nor fails ;

Thundering, swarm upon swarm,

He sweeps like a flood through the vales."

" Pacifist, what of the night ? "

" We hear the thunder afar,

But all is still where we are ;

Good and evil are friends.

## A WATCH IN THE NIGHT 227

Here in the passionless height  
War and morality cease,  
And the noon with the midnight blends  
In perennial twilight of peace."

H. E. WILKES.

Feb. 6, 1918.

## The Windmill

A SONG OF VICTORY.

Yes, it was all like a garden glowing  
When first we came to the hill-top there,  
And we laughed to know that the Bosch was going,  
And laughed to know that the land was fair ;  
Acre by acre of green fields sleeping,  
Hamlets hid in the tufts of wood,  
And out of the trees were church-towers peeping,  
And away on a hillock the Windmill stood.

*Then, ah then, 'twas a land worth winning,  
And now there is naught but the naked clay,  
But I can remember the Windmill spinning,  
And the four sails shone in the sun that day.*



228      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

But the guns came after and tore the hedges  
And stripped the spinneys and churned the  
plain,  
And a man walks now on the windy ledges  
And looks for a feather of green in vain ;  
Acre by acre the sad eye traces  
The rust-red bones of the earth laid bare,  
And the sign-posts stand in the market-places  
To say that a village was builded there.

*But better the French fields stark and dying  
Than ripe for a conqueror's fat content,  
And I can remember the mill-sails flying,  
Yet I cheered with the rest when the Wind-  
mill went.*

Away to the East the grass-land surges  
Acre by acre across the line,  
And we must go on till the end like scourges,  
Though the wilderness stretch from sea to  
Rhine ;  
But I dream some days of a great reveille,  
When the buds shall burst in the Blasted Wood,

And the children chatter in Death-Trap Alley,  
And a windmill stand where the Windmill stood.

*And we that remember the Windmill spinning,  
We may go under, but not in vain,  
For our sons shall come in the new beginning  
And see that the Windmill spins again.*

A. P. HERBERT.

April 10, 1918.

## The Return

Into the home-side wood, the long straight aisle  
of pines,

I turned with a slower step than ever my youth-  
time knew ;

Dusk was gold in the valley, grey in the deep-cut  
chines,

And below, like a dream afloat, was the quiet  
sea's fading blue.

Oh, it was joy to see the still night folding down  
Over the simple fields I loved, saved by the  
sacred dead,

230 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Playmates and friends of mine, brothers in camp  
and town,  
The loyal hearts that leapt at the word that  
England said.

I paused by the cross-roads' sign, for a tinkling  
sound rang clear,  
The small sharp sound of a bell away up the  
western road ;  
And presently out of the mist, with clank and  
clatter of gear,  
Rumbled the carrier's cart with its tilt and its  
motley load :—

The old grey horse that moved in the misty  
headlight's gleam,  
The carrier crouched on his seat, with the bell-  
boy perched astride,  
Voices from under the tilt, and laughter—was it  
a dream,  
Or was I awake and alive, standing there by  
the cross-roads' side ?

## THE RETURN

231

So I came to the village street where glinting  
lights shone fair,

The little homely lights that make the glad  
tears start ;

And I knew that one was yearning and waiting to  
welcome me there,

She that is mother in blood and steadfast  
comrade in heart.

Oh, but my youth swept back like the tide to a  
thirsty shore,

Or the little wind at dawn that heralds the wash  
of rain ;

And I ran, I ran, with a song in my heart to the  
unlatched door,

I returned to the gentle breast that had nursed  
me—a boy again !

C. KENNETH BURROW.

Dec. 18, 1918.

## Good-Bye, Australians

Through the Channel's drift and toss  
Swift your homing transports churn ;  
Soon for you the Southron Cross  
High above your bows shall burn ;  
Soon beyond the rolling Bight  
Gleam the Leeuwin's lance of light.

Rich reward your hearts shall hold,  
None less dear if long delayed,  
For with gifts of wattle-gold  
Shall your country's debt be paid ;  
From her sunlight's golden store  
She shall heal your hurts of war.

Ere the mantling Channel mist  
Dim your distant decks and spars,  
And your flag that victory kissed  
And Valhalla hung with stars—  
Crowd and watch our signal fly :  
" Gallant hearts, good-bye ! *Good-bye !* "

W. H. OGILVIE.

Jan. 15, 1919.

## The Belfries

If you should go to La Bassée  
Or Bethune, grey and bare,  
You'll hear the sweetest bells that play  
A faint and chiming air ;  
And belfries in each little town  
Sing out the hour and mark it down.

If you should go to La Bassée  
Or walk the Bethune street  
You'll see the lorries pass that way  
And hear the tramp of feet ;  
And where the road with trees is lined  
You'll watch the long battalions wind.

But all the clocks that mark the time  
Are months and years too slow,  
And all the bells that ring and chime  
Strike hours of long ago,  
And all the belfries where you pass  
Lie tumbled in the dust and grass.

234 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Yet still the long battalions wind,  
Though all the men are gone,  
Because one hour has stayed behind  
And wanders there alone—  
Yes, one heroic shining hour  
Chimes on from every fallen tower.

MRS. A. P. TROTTER.

Aug. 27, 1919.

### Saturdays

Now has the soljer handed in his pack,  
And "Peace on earth, goodwill to all" been  
sung;  
I've got a pension and my ole job back—  
Me, with my right leg gawn and half a lung;  
But, Lord! I'd give my bit o' buckshee pay  
And my gratuity in honest Brads  
To go down to the field nex' Saturday  
And have a game o' football with the lads.

It's Saturdays as does it. In the week  
It's not too bad ; there's cinemas and things ;  
But I gets up against it, so to speak,  
When half-day-off comes round again and  
brings  
The smell o' mud an' grass an' sweating men  
Back to my mind—there's no denying it ;  
There ain't much comfort tellin' myself then,  
“ Thank Gawd, I went *toot sweet* an' did my  
bit ! ”

Oh, yes, I knows I'm lucky, more or less ;  
There's some pore blokes back there who  
played the game  
Until they heard the whistle go, I guess,  
For Time an' Time eternal. All the same  
It makes me proper down at heart and sick  
To see the lads go laughing off to play ;  
I'd sell my bloomin' soul to have a kick—  
But what's the good of talkin', anyway ?

E. W. FIGOTT.

Jan. 28, 1920.





## *Sea-Scape*

237



## The North Sea Ground

Oh, Grimsby is a pleasant town as any man may  
find,

An' Grimsby wives are thrifty wives, an' Grimsby  
girls are kind,

An' Grimsby lads were never yet the lads to lag  
behind

When there's men's work doin' on the North  
Sea ground.

An' it's "Wake up, Johnnie!" for the high  
tide's flowin',

An' off the misty waters a cold wind blowin' ;

Skipper's come aboard, an' it's time that we were  
goin',

An' there's fine fish waitin' on the North Sea  
ground.

240 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Soles in the Silver Pit—an' there we 'll let 'em lie ;  
Cod on the Dogger—oh, we 'll fetch 'em by-an'-by;  
War on the water—an' it's time to serve an' die,  
For there's wild work doin' on the North Sea  
ground.

An' it's "Wake up, Johnnie!" they want you  
at the trawlin'  
(With your long sea-boots and your tarry old  
tarpaulin') ;  
All across the bitter seas duty comes a-callin'  
In the Winter's weather off the North Sea  
ground.

It's well we've learned to laugh at fear—the sea  
has taught us how ;  
It's well we've shaken hands with death—we 'll  
not be strangers now,  
With death in every climbin' wave before the  
trawler's bow,  
An' the black spawn swimmin' on the North  
Sea ground.

## THE NORTH SEA GROUND 241

Good luck to all our fightin' ships that rule the  
English sea ;  
Good luck to our brave merchantmen wherever  
they may be ;  
The sea it is their highway, an' we've got to sweep  
it free  
For the ships passin' over on the North Sea  
ground.

An' it's "Wake up, Johnnie!" for the sea wind's  
crying ;  
"Time an' time to go where the herrin' gulls are  
flyin' ;"  
An' down below the stormy seas the dead men  
lyin',  
Oh, the dead lying quiet on the North Sea  
ground !

MISS C. FOX SMITH.

March 24, 1915.

## The Ballad of the Resurrection Packet

Oh, she's in from the deep water, she's safe in  
port once more,  
With shot 'oles in the funnel which were not  
there before ;  
Yes, she's 'ome, dearie, 'ome, an' we've 'alf the  
sea inside !  
Ought to 'ave sunk, but she couldn't if she tried.

An' it was " 'Ome, dearie, 'ome, oh, she'll bring  
us 'ome some day,  
Rollin' both rails under in the old sweet way,  
Freezin' in the foul weather, fryin' in the fine,  
The resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse Line !"

If she'd been built for sinkin' she'd hâve done it  
long ago ;  
She's tried her best in every sea an' all the winds  
that blow,

## RESURRECTION PACKET BALLAD 243

In hurricanes at Galveston, pamperos off the Plate,  
An' icy Cape 'Orn snorters which freeze you  
while you wait.

She's been ashore at Vallipo, Algoa Bay likewise,  
She's broke her screw-shaft off Cape Race an'  
stove 'er bows in ice,  
She's lost 'er deck-load overboard an' 'alf 'er  
bulwarks too,  
An' she's come in with fire aboard, smokin' like  
a flue.

But it's "'Ome, dearie, 'ome, oh, she gets there  
just the same,  
Reekin', leakin', 'alf a wreck, scarred an' stove  
an' lame ;  
Patch 'er up with putty, lads, tie 'er up with twine,  
The resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse Line !"

A bit west the Scillies the sky was stormy red,  
" To-night we 'll lift Saint Agnes Light if all goes  
well," we said,



244 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

But we met a slinkin' submarine as dark was  
comin' down,  
An' she ripped our rotten plates away an' left us  
there to drown.

A bit west the Scillies we thought her sure to sink,  
There was 'alf a gale blowin', the sky was black  
as ink,  
The seas begun to mount an' the wind begun to  
thunder,  
An' every wave that come, oh, we thought 'twould  
roll 'er under.

But it was "'Ome, dearie, 'ome, an' she'll get  
there after all,  
Steamin' when she can steam, an' when she can't  
she'll crawl ;  
This year, next year—rain or storm or shine—  
The resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse Line !"  
We thought about the bulk-'eads—we wondered  
if they'd last,  
An' the cook 'e started groanin' an' repentin' of  
the past ;

## RESURRECTION PACKET BALLAD 245

But thinkin' an' groanin', oh, they wouldn't  
shift the water,  
So we got the pumps a-workin' same as British  
seamen oughter.

If she'd been a crack liner she'd 'ave gone like a  
stone,  
An' why she didn't sink is a thing as can't be  
known ;  
Our arms was made of lead, our backs was split  
with achin',  
But we pumped 'er into port just before the day  
was breakin' !

For it was "'Ome, dearie, 'ome, oh, she'll bring  
us 'ome some day,—  
Don't you 'ear the pumps a-clankin' in the old  
sweet way ?—  
This year, next year—rain or storm or shine—  
She's the resurrection packet of the Salt 'Orse  
Line !'"

MISS C. FOX SMITH.

Nov. 3, 1915.

## The Figure-Head

A SALT SEA YARN.

There was an ancient carver that carved of a saint,  
But the parson wouldn't have it, so he took a pot  
of paint

And changed its angel garment for a dashing  
soldier rig,

And said it was a figure-head and sold it to a brig.

The brig hauled her mainsail to an off-shore  
draught,

Then she shook her snowy royals and the Scillies  
went abaft ;

And cloudy with her canvas she ran before the  
Trade

Till she got to the Equator, where she struck a  
merrymaid.

A string of pearls and conches were all of her togs,  
But the flying-fish and porpoises they followed  
her like dogs ;

She had a voice of silver and lips of coral red,  
She climbed the dolphin-striker and kissed the  
figure-head.

Then every starry evening she 'd swim in the foam  
About the bows, a-singing like a nightingale at  
Home ;  
She 'd call to him and sing to him as sweetly as a  
bird,  
But the wooden-headed effigy he never said a word.

And every starry evening in the Doldrum calms  
She 'd wriggle up the bobstay and throw her tender  
arms  
About his scarlet shoulders and fondle him and  
cry  
And stroke his curly whiskers, but he never  
winked an eye.

She couldn't get an answer to her tears or moans,  
So she went and told her daddy, told the ancient  
Davy Jones ;

248      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Old Davy damned his eyesight and puzzled of his  
wits,  
Then whistled up his hurricanes and tore the brig  
to bits.

Down on the ocean-bed, green fathoms deep,  
Where the wrecks lie rotting and great sea-  
serpents creep,  
In a gleaming grotto all built of sailors' bones,  
Sits the handsome figure-head, listening to Miss  
Jones.

Songs o' love she sings him the livelong day,  
And she hangs upon his bosom and sobs the night  
away,  
But he never, never answers, for beneath his  
soldier paint  
The wooden-headed lunatic still thinks that he's  
a saint.

CROSBIE GARSTIN.

July 26, 1916.

## The Little Ships

["The small steamer —— struck a mine yesterday and sank.  
The crew perished."—Daily Paper.]

Who to the deep in ships go down  
Great marvels do behold,  
But comes the day when some must drown  
In the grey sea and cold.  
For galleons lost great bells do toll,  
But now must we implore  
God's ear for sunken Little Ships  
Who are not heard of more.

When ships of war put out to sea  
They go with guns and mail,  
That so the chance may equal be  
Should foemen them assail ;  
But Little Ships men's errands run  
And are not clad for strife ;  
God's mercy then on Little Ships  
Who cannot fight for life.

250      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

To warm and cure, to clothe and feed,  
They stoutly put to sea,  
And since that men of them had need  
Made light of jeopardy ;  
Each in her hour her fate did meet  
Nor flinched nor made outcry ;  
God's love be with these Little Ships  
Who could not choose but die.

To friar and nun, and every one  
Who lives to save and tend,  
Sisters were these whose work is done  
And cometh thus to end ;  
Full well they knew what risk they ran  
But still were strong to give ;  
God's grace for all the Little Ships  
Who died that men might live.

C. HILTON BROWN.

Sept. 20, 1916.

## The Lone Hand

She took her tide and she passed the Bar with the  
first o' the morning light ;

She dipped her flag to the coast patrol at the  
coming down of the night ;

She has left the lights of the friendly shore and  
the smell of the English land,

And she's somewhere South o' the Fastnet  
now—

God help her . . . South o' the Fastnet now,  
Playing her own lone hand.

She is ugly and squat as a ship can be, she was new  
when the Ark was new,

But she takes her chance and she runs her risk as  
well as the best may do ;

And it's little she heeds the lurking death and  
little she gets of fame,

Out yonder South o' the Fastnet now—

God help her . . . South o' the Fastnet now,  
Playing her own lone game.



252 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

She has played it once, she has played it twice,  
she has played it times a score ;  
Her luck and her pluck are the two trump cards  
that have won her the game before ;  
And life is the stake where the tin fish run and  
Death is the dealer's name,  
Out yonder South o' the Fastnet now—  
God help her . . . South o' the Fastnet now,  
Playing her own lone game.

MISS C. FOX SMITH.

Jan. 2, 1918.

## A Dream Ship

Oh I wish I had a clipper ship with carvings on  
her counter,  
With lanterns on her poop-rail of beaten  
copper wrought ;  
I would dress her like a lady in the whitest cloth  
and mount her  
With a long bow-chasing swivel and a gun at  
every port.

I would sign me on a master who had solved  
MERCATOR's riddle,

A nigger cook with earrings who neither  
chewed nor drank,

Who wore a red bandanna and was handy on the  
fiddle,

I would take a piping bos'un and a cabin-boy  
to spank.

Then some fine Summer morning when the  
Falmouth cocks were crowing

I would set my capstan spinning to the chanting  
of all hands,

And the milkmaids on the uplands would lament  
to see me going

As I beat for open Channel and away to foreign  
lands,

*Singing—*

Fare ye well, O lady mine,

Fare ye well, my pretty one,

For the anchor's at the cat-head and the voyage  
is begun,

254      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

The wind is in the mainsail, we're slipping  
from the land  
Hull-down with all sail making, close-hauled with  
the white-tops breaking,  
Bound for the Rio Grande.  
Fare ye well !

With the flying-fish around us and a porpoise  
school before us,  
Full crowded under royals to the south'ard we  
would sweep ;  
We would hear the bull whales blowing and the  
mermaids sing in chorus,  
And perhaps the white seal mummies hum  
their chubby calves to sleep.

We would see the hot towns paddling in the surf  
of Spanish waters,  
And prowl beneath dim balconies and twang  
discreet guitars,  
And sigh our adoration to Don Juan's lovely  
daughters  
Till they lifted their mantillas and their dark  
eyes shone like stars.

We would cruise by fairy islands where the gaudy  
parrot screeches

And the turtle in his soup-tureen floats basking  
in the calms ;

We would see the fire-flies winking in the bush  
above the beaches

And a moon of honey yellow drifting up behind  
the palms.

We would crown ourselves with garlands and  
tread a frolic measure

With the nut-brown island beauties in the  
firelight by the huts ;

We would give them rum and kisses ; we would  
hunt for pirate treasure,

And bombard the apes with pebbles in exchange  
for coco-nuts.

When we wearied of our wand'rings 'neath the  
blazing Southern heaven

And dreamed of Kentish orchards fragrant-  
scented after rain,

256 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Of the cream there is in Cornwall and the cider  
brewed in Devon,

We would crowd our yards with canvas and  
sweep foaming home again,

*Singing—*

Cheerily, O lady mine,

Cheerily, my sweetheart true,

For the blest Blue Peter's flying and I'm rolling  
home to you ;

For I'm tired of Spanish ladies and of tropic  
afterglows,

Heart-sick for an English Spring-time, all afire  
for an English ring-time,

In love with an English rose.

Rolling home !

CROSBIE GARSTIN.

Jan. 17, 1917.

## The Voyage of H.M.S. *President*

### A DREAM

[Mr. Punch means no disrespect to H.M.S. *President*, which, being moored in the Thames off Bouverie Street, he has always looked upon as his guardship, but he has often wondered what would happen if only a few thousands of the officers and men borne on her books were to issue from the Admiralty and elsewhere—but especially from the Admiralty—and go on board their ship; hence the disquieting dream that follows.]

It was eighteen bells in the larboard watch with  
a neap-tide running free,  
And a gale blew out of the Ludgate Hills when  
the *President* put to sea ;  
An old mule came down Bouverie Street to give  
her a helping hand,  
And I didn't think much of the ship as such, but  
the crew was something grand.

The bo'sun stood on a Hoxton bus and blew the  
Luncheon Call,  
And the ship's crew came from the four wide  
winds, but chiefly from Whitehall ;

P.P.

R

258      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

They came like the sand on a wind-swept strand,  
like shots from a Maxim gun,  
And the old mule stood with the tow-rope on and  
said, "It can't be done."

With a glitter of wiggly braid they came, with a  
clatter of forms and files,  
The little A.P.'s they swarmed like bees, the  
Commodores stretched for miles ;  
Post-Captains came with hats in flame, and  
Admirals by the ell,  
And which of the lot was the biggest pot there  
was never a man could tell.

They choked the staggering quarter-deck and did  
the thing no good ;  
They hung like tars on the mizzen-spars (or those  
of the crowd that could) ;  
Far out of view still streamed the queue when the  
moke said, "Well, I'm blowed  
If I'll compete with the 'ole damn Fleet," and he  
pushed off down the road.

VOYAGE OF H.M.S. *PRESIDENT* 259

And the great ship she sailed after him, though  
the Lord knows how she did,  
With her gunwales getting a terrible wetting and  
a brace of her stern sheets hid,  
When up and spoke a sailor-bloke and he said,  
“ It strikes me queer,  
And I ’ve sailed the sea in the R.N.V. this five-and  
forty year ;

“ But a ship as can’t ’old ’arf ’er crew, why, what  
sort of a ship is ’er ?  
And oo ’s in charge of the pore old barge if dangers  
do occur ?  
And I says to you, I says, “ ’Eave to, until this  
point ’s agreed ’ ; ”  
And some said, “ Why ? ” and the rest, “ Ay,  
ay,” but the mule he paid no heed.

So the old beast hauled and the Admirals bawled  
and the crew they fought like cats,  
And the ship went dropping along past Wapping  
and down by the Plumstead Flats ;



260      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

But the rest of the horde that wasn't aboard they  
trotted along the bank,  
Or jumped like frogs from the Isle of Dogs, or  
fell in the stream and sank.

But while they went by the coast of Kent up spoke  
an aged tar—  
“A joke's a joke, but this 'ere moke is going a bit  
too far ;  
I can tell by the motion we're nearing the ocean  
—and *that's* too far for me ;”  
But just as he spoke the tow-rope broke and the  
ship sailed out to sea.

And somewhere out on the deep, no doubt, they  
probe the problems through  
Of who's in charge of the poor old barge and what  
they ought to do ;  
And the great files flash and the dockets crash and  
the ink-wells smoke like sin,  
But many a U-boat tells the tale how the *President*  
did her in.

## VOYAGE OF H.M.S. *PRESIDENT* 261

For many have tried to pierce her hide and flung  
torpedoes at her,  
But the vessel, they found, was barraged round  
with a mile of paper matter ;  
The whole sea swarms with Office Forms and the  
U-boats stick like glue,  
So nothing can touch the *President* much, for  
nothing at all gets through.

\* \* \* \*

But never, alack, will the ship come back, for the  
*President* she 's stuck too.

A. P. HERBERT.

May 15, 1918.

## The Old Ships

They called 'em from the breakers' yards, the  
shores of Dead Men's Bay,  
From coaling wharves the wide world round,  
red-rusty where they lay,  
And chipped and caulked and scoured and tarred  
and sent 'em on their way.

It didn't matter what they were nor what they  
once had been,  
They cleared the decks of harbour-junk and  
scraped the stringers clean  
And turned 'em out to try their luck with the  
mine and submarine . . .

With a scatter o' pitch and a plate or two,  
And she's fit for the risks o' war—  
Fit for to carry a freight or two,  
The same as she used before ;  
To carry a cargo here and there,  
And what she carries she don't much care  
Boxes or barrels or baulks or bales,  
Coal or cotton or nuts or nails,  
Pork or pepper or Spanish beans,  
Mules or millet or sewing-machines,  
Or a trifle o' lumber from Hastings  
Mill. . .  
She's carried 'em all and she'll carry 'em  
still,  
The same as she's done before.

And some were waiting for a freight, and some  
were laid away,  
And some were liners that had broke all records  
in their day,  
And some were common eight-knot tramps that  
couldn't make it pay.

And some were has-been sailing cracks of famous  
old renown,  
Had logged their eighteen easy when they ran  
their easting down  
With cargo, mails and passengers bound South  
from London Town . . .

With a handful or two o' ratline stuff,  
And she 's fit for to sail once more ;  
She 's rigged and she 's ready and right  
enough,  
The same as she was before ;  
The same old ship on the same old road  
She 's always used and she 's always  
knowned,

For there isn't a blooming wind can blow  
In all the latitudes, high or low,  
Nor there isn't a kind of sea that rolls,  
From both the Tropics to both the Poles,  
But she's knowed 'em all since she sailed  
sou' Spain,  
She's weathered the lot, and she'll do it  
again,  
The same as she's done before.

And sail or steam or coasting craft, the big ships  
with the small,  
The barges which were steamers once, the hulks  
that once were tall,  
They wanted tonnage cruel bad, and so they  
fetched 'em all.

And some went out as fighting-craft and shipped  
a fighting crew,  
But most they tramped the same old road they  
always used to do,  
With a crowd of merchant-sailormen, as might  
be me or you . . .

With a lick o' paint and a bucket o' tar,  
And she's fit for the seas once more,  
To carry the Duster near and far,  
The same as she used before ;  
The same old Rag on the same old  
round,  
Bar Light vessel and Puget Sound,  
Brass and Bonny and Grand Bassam,  
Both the Rios and Rotterdam—  
Dutch and Dagoes, niggers and Chinks,  
Palms and fire-flies, spices and stinks—  
Portland (Oregon), Portland (Maine),  
She's been there once and she'll go there  
again,  
The same as she's been before.

\* \* \* \*

Their bones are strewed to every tide from  
Torres Strait to Tyne—  
God's truth, they've paid their blooming dues to  
the tin-fish and the mine,  
By storm or calm, by night or day, from Long-  
ships light to Line.

266 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

With a bomb or a mine or a bursting shell,  
And she'll follow the seas no more,  
She's fetched and carried and served you  
well,

The same as she's done before—  
They've fetched and carried and gone  
their way,

As good ships should and as brave men  
may . . .

And we'll build 'em still, and we'll breed  
'em again,

The same good ships and the same good  
men,

The same—the same—the same as  
we've done before !

MISS C. FOX SMITH.

April 9, 1919.

## The Three Ships

I had tramped along through dockland till the  
day was all but spent,  
But for all the ships I there did find I could not be  
content ;  
By the good pull-ups for carmen and the Chinese  
dives I passed,  
And the streets of grimy houses each one grimier  
than the last,  
And the shops whose shoddy oilskins many a  
sailorman has cursed  
In the wintry Western ocean when it's weather  
of the worst—  
All among the noisy graving docks and waterside  
saloons  
And the pubs with punk pianos grinding out  
their last year's tunes,  
And the rattle of the winches handling freights  
from near and far ;



268      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And the whiffs of oil and engines, and the smells  
of bilge and tar ;

And of all the craft I came across, the finest for  
to see

Was a dandy ocean liner—but she wasn't meant  
for me !

She was smart as any lady, and the place was fair  
alive

With the swarms of cooks and waiters, just like  
bees about a hive ;

It was nigh her time for sailing, and a man could  
hardly stir

For the piles of rich folks' dunnage here and there  
and everywhere.

But the stewards and the awnings and the white  
paint and the gold

Take a deal o' living up to for a chap that's  
getting old ;

And the mailboat life's a fine one, but a shellback  
likes to be

Where he feels a kind o' homelike after half his  
life at sea.

So I sighed and passed her by—"Fare you well, my dear," said I,

"You're as smart and you're as dainty as can be ;

You're a lady through and through, but I know it wouldn't do—

You're a bit too much a rich man's gal for me !"

So I rambled on through dockland, but I couldn't seem to find

Out of all the craft I saw there just the one to please my mind ;

There were tramps and there were tankers, there were freighters large and small,

There were concrete ships and standard ships and motor ships and all,

And of all the blessed shooting-match the one I liked the best

Was a saucy topsail schooner from some harbour in the West.

She was neat and she was pretty as a country lass should be,

270      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

And the girl's name on her counter seemed to  
    suit her to a T ;  
You could almost smell the roses, almost see the  
    red and green  
Of the Devon plough and pasture where her  
    home port must have been,  
And I'll swear her blocks were creaking in a kind  
    o' Devon drawl—  
Oh, she took my fancy rarely, but I left her after  
    all !  
For it's well enough, is coasting, when the summer  
    days are long,  
And the summer hours slip by you just as sweetly  
    as a song,  
When you catch the scent of clover blowing to  
    you off the shore,  
And there's scarce a ripple breaking from the  
    Land's End to the Nore ;  
But I like a bit more sea-room when the short  
    dark days come in,  
And the Channel gales and sea-fogs and the  
    nights as black as sin,

When you're groping in a fairway that's as  
crowded as a town  
With the whole damned Channel traffic looking  
out to run you down,  
Or a bloody lee shore 's waiting with its fierce and  
foaming lips  
For the bones of poor drowned sailormen and  
broken ribs of ships.

So I sighed and shook my head—"Fare you  
well, my dear," I said,

"You're a bit too fond o' soundings, lass,  
for me ;

Oh, you're Devon's own dear daughter—but  
my fancy's for deep water

And I think I'll set a course for open  
sea !"

So I tramped along through dockland, through  
the Isle of Dogs I went,  
But for all the ships I found there still I couldn't  
be content,

Till, not far from Millwall Basin, in a dingy,  
dreary pond,  
Mouldy wharf-sheds all around it and a breaker's  
yard beyond,  
With its piles of rusty anchors and chain-cables  
large and small,  
Broken bones of ships forgotten—there I found  
her after all !  
She was foul from West Coast harbours, she was  
worn with wind and tide,  
There was paint on all the bright work that was  
once her captain's pride,  
And her gear was like a junk-store, and her decks  
a shame to see,  
And her shrouds they wanted rattling down as  
badly as could be ;  
But she lay there on the water just as graceful  
as a gull,  
Keeping some old builder's secret in her strong  
and slender hull ;  
By her splendid sweep of sheer-line and her clean,  
keen clipper bow

You might know she 'd been a beauty, and, by  
God, she was one now !  
And the river gulls were crying, and the sluggish  
river tide  
Made a kind of running whisper by her red and  
rusted side,  
And the river bréeze came murmuring her  
tattered gear among,  
Like some old shellback, known of old, that sings  
a sailor's song,  
That whistles through his yellow teeth an old  
deepwater tune  
(The same did make the windows shake in the  
Boomerang Saloon !),  
Or by the steersman's elbow stays to tell a sea-  
man's tale  
About the skippers and the crews in great old  
days of sail !

And I said : " My dear, although you are  
growing old, I know,  
And as crazy and as cranky as can be,

P.P.

S

274      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

If you'll take me for your lover, oh we'll sail  
the wide seas over,  
You're the ship among them all that's  
meant for me !"

MISS C. FOX SMITH.

Oct. 1, 1919.

## Spanish Ledges

SCILLY.

The bells of Cadiz clashed for them  
When they sailed away ;  
The Citadel guns, saluting, crashed for them  
Over the Bay ;  
With banners of saints aloft unfolding,  
Their poops a glitter of golden moulding,  
Tambours throbbing and trumpets neighing,  
Into the sunset they went swaying.  
But the port they sought they wandered wide of,  
And they won't see Spain again this side of  
Judgment Day.

For they're down, deep down, in Dead Man's  
Town,

Twenty fathoms under the clean green waters.  
No more hauling sheets in the rolling treasure  
fleets,

No more stinking rations and dread red  
slaughters ;  
No galley oars shall bow them nor shrill whips  
cow them,

Frost shall not shrivel them nor the hot sun  
smite,

No more watch to keep, nothing now but sleep—  
Sleep and take it easy in the long twilight.

The bells of Cadiz tolled for them

Mournful and glum ;

Up in the Citadel requiems rolled for them

On the black drum ;

Priests had many a mass to handle,

Nuestra Señora many a candle,

And many a lass grew old in praying

For a sight of those topsails homeward  
swaying—



276      POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

But it's late to wait till a girl is bride of  
A Jack who won't be back this side of  
                 Kingdom Come.

But little they care down there, down there,  
    Hid from time and tempest by the jade-green  
                 waters ;  
They have loves a-plenty down at fathom twenty,  
    Pearly-skinned silver-finned mer-kings'  
                 daughters.  
At the gilt quarter-ports sit the Dons at their  
    sports,  
    A-dicing and drinking the red wine and white,  
While the crews forget their wrongs in the sea-  
    maids' songs  
    And dance upon the foc'sles in the grey ghost  
    light.

CROSBIE GARSTIN.

Sept. 22, 1920.

## A Cornish Lullaby

A.D. 1760.

Sleep, my little ugling,  
Daddy's gone a-smuggling,  
Daddy's gone to Roscoff in the *Mevagissey Maid*,  
A sloop of ninety tons  
With ten brass-carriage guns,  
To teach the King's ships manners and respect  
for honest trade.

Hush, my joy and sorrow,  
Daddy'll come to-morrow .  
Bringing baccy, tea and snuff and brandy home  
from France ;  
And he'll run the goods ashore  
While the old Collectors snore  
And the wicked troopers gamble in the dens of  
Penzance.

278 POEMS FROM 'PUNCH'

Rock-a-bye, my honey,  
Daddy's making money ;  
You shall be a gentleman and sail with privateers,  
With a silver cup for sack  
And a blue coat on your back,  
With diamonds on your finger-bones and gold  
rings in your ears.

CROSBIE GARSTIN.

June 30, 1920.

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